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PARENTS AND CHILDREN

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# PARENTS AND CHILDREN

A SEQUEL TO  
"HOME EDUCATION"

BY

CHARLOTTE M. MASON



LONDON

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TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE PARENTS' NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION

*THIS VOLUME*

IS INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR  
AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE AFFECTION AND  
REVERENCE WITH WHICH THEIR  
EFFORTS INSPIRE HER

AMBLESIDE,  
*November 1896.*





## P R E F A C E

THE following essays have appeared in the *Parents' Review*, and were addressed, from time to time, to a body of parents who are making a practical study of the principles of education—the “Parents’ National Educational Union.” The present volume is a sequel to *Home Education* (Kegan Paul & Co.), a work which was the means of originating this Union of Parents. It is not too much to say that the Parents’ Union exists to advance, with more or less method and with more or less steadfastness, a definite school of educational thought of which the two main principles are—the recognition of the physical basis of habit, *i.e.* of the material side of education; and of the inspiring and formative power of the Idea, *i.e.* of the immaterial, or spiritual, side of education. These two guiding principles, covering as they do the whole field of human nature, should enable us to deal rationally with all the complex problems of education; and the object of the following essays is, not to give an exhaustive application of these principles—the British Museum itself would hardly contain all the volumes needful for such an undertaking—but to give an example or a suggestion,

here and there, as to how such and such an habit may be formed, such and such a formative idea be implanted and fostered. The intention of the volume will account to the reader for what may seem a want of connected and exhaustive treatment of the subject, and for the iteration of the same principles in various connections. The author ventures to hope that the following hints and suggestions will not prove the less practically useful to busy parents, because they rest on profound educational principles.

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B O O K I

*THEORY*





# PARENTS AND CHILDREN

## CHAPTER I

### THE FAMILY

“The family is the unit of the nation.”—F. D. MAURICE.

IT is probable that no other educational thinker has succeeded in affecting parents so profoundly as did Rousseau. *Emile* is little read now, but how many current theories of the regimen proper for children have there their unsuspected source? Everybody knows—and his contemporaries knew it better than we—that Jean Jacques Rousseau had not enough sterling character to warrant him to pose as an authority on any subject, least of all on that of education. He sets himself down a poor thing, and we see no cause to reject the evidence of his *Confessions*. We are not carried away by the charm of his style; his “forcible febleness” does not dazzle us. No man can *say* beyond that which he *is*, and there is a want of grit in his philosophic theories that removes most of them from the category of available thought.

But Rousseau had the insight to perceive one of those patent truths which, somehow, it takes a genius to discover; and, because truth is indeed prized above rubies, the perception of that truth gave him rank

as a great teacher. "Is *Jean Jacques* also among the prophets?" people asked, and ask still; and that he had thousands of fervent disciples amongst the educated parents of Europe, together with the fact that his teaching has filtered into many a secluded home of our own day, is answer enough. Indeed, no other educationalist has had a tithe of the influence exercised by Rousseau. Under the spell of his teaching, people in the fashionable world, like that Russian Princess Galitzin, forsook society, and went off with their children to some quiet corner where they could devote every hour of the day, and every power they had, to the fulfilment of the duties which devolve upon parents. Courtly mothers retired from the world, sometimes even left their husbands, to work hard at the classics, mathematics, sciences, that they might with their own lips instruct their children. "What else am I for?" they asked; and the feeling spread that the bringing up of the children was the one work of primary importance for men and women.

Whatever extravagance he had seen fit to advance, Rousseau would still have found a following, because he had chanced to touch a spring that opened many hearts. He was one of the few educationalists who made his appeal to the parental instincts. He did not say, "We have no hope of the parents, let us work for the children!" Such are the faint-hearted and pessimistic things we say to-day. What he said was, in effect, "Fathers and mothers, this is your work, and you only can do it. It rests with you, parents of young children, to be the saviours of society unto a thousand generations. Nothing else matters. The avocations about which people weary themselves are as foolish child's play compared with this one serious

business of bringing up our children in advance of ourselves."

People listened, as we have seen ; the response to his teaching was such a letting out of the waters of parental enthusiasm as has never been known before nor since. And Rousseau, weak and little worthy, was a preacher of righteousness in this, that he turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, and so far made ready a people prepared for the Lord. But alas ! having secured the foundation, he had little better than wood, hay, and stubble to offer to the builders.

Rousseau succeeded, as he deserved to succeed, in awaking many parents to the binding character, the vast range, the profound seriousness of parental obligations. He failed, and deserved to fail, as he offered his own crude conceits by way of an educational code. But his success is very cheering. He perceived that God placed the training of every child in the hands of two, a father and a mother ; and the response to his teaching proved that, as the waters answer to the drawing of the moon, so do the hearts of parents rise to the idea of the great work committed to them.

Though it is true, no doubt, that every parent is conscious of unwritten laws, more or less definite and noble according to his own status, yet an attempt, however slight, to codify these laws may be interesting to parents.

"The family is the unit of the nation." This pregnant saying suggests some aspects of the parents' calling. From time to time, in all ages of the world, communistic societies have arisen, sometimes for the sake of co-operation in a great work, social or religious, more recently by way of protest against inequalities

of condition ; but, in every case, the fundamental rule of such societies is, that the members shall have all things in common. We are apt to think, in our careless way, that such attempts at communistic association are foredoomed to failure. But that is not the case. In the United States, perhaps because hired labour is less easy to obtain than it is with us, they appear to have found a congenial soil, and there many well-regulated communistic bodies flourish. There are failures, too, many and disastrous, and it appears that these may usually be traced to one cause, a government enfeebled by the attempt to combine democratic and communistic principles, to dwell together in a common life, while each does what is right in his own eyes. A communistic body can thrive only under a vigorous and absolute rule.

A favourite dream of socialism is—or was until the idea of collectivism obtained—that each State of Europe should be divided into an infinite number of small self-contained communes. Now, it sometimes happens that the thing we desire is already realised, had we eyes to see. The family is, practically, a commune. In the family the undivided property is enjoyed by all the members in common, and, in the family there is equality of social condition, with diversity of duties. In lands where patriarchal practices still obtain, the family merges into the tribe, and the head of the family is the chief of the tribe—a very absolute sovereign indeed. In our own country, families are usually small, parents and their immediate offspring, with the attendants and belongings which naturally gather to a household, and, let it not be forgotten, *form part of the family*. The smallness of the family tends to obscure its character, and we see no force in the phrase at the head of this chapter ;



we do not perceive that, if the unit of the nation is the natural commune, the family, then is the family the social microcosm, pledged to carry on within itself all the functions of the State, with the delicacy, precision, and fulness of detail proper to work done on a small scale.

It by no means follows from this communistic view of the family that the domestic policy should be a policy of isolation; on the contrary, it is not too much to say, that a nation is civilised in proportion as it is able to establish close and friendly relations with other nations, and that, not with one or two, but with many; and, conversely, that a nation is barbarous in proportion to its isolation; and does not a family decline in intelligence and virtue when from generation to generation it "keeps itself to itself"?

Again, it is probable that a nation is healthy in proportion as it has its own proper outlets, its colonies and dependencies, which it is ever solicitous to include in the national life. So of the nation in miniature, the family; the struggling families at 'the back,' the orphanage, the mission, the necessitous of our acquaintance, are they not for the sustenance of the family in the higher life?

But it is not enough that the family commune maintain neighbourly relations with other such communes, and towards the stranger within the gates. The family is the unit of the nation; and the nation is an organic whole, a living body, built up, like the natural body, of an infinite number of living organisms. It is only as it contributes its quota towards the national life that the life of the family is complete. Public interests must be shared, public work taken up, the public welfare cherished—in a

word, its integrity with the nation must be preserved, or the family ceases to be part of a living whole, and becomes positively injurious, as decayed tissue in the animal organism.

Nor are the interests of the family limited to those of the nation. As it is the part of the nation to maintain wider relations, to be in touch with all the world, to be ever in advance in the great march of human progress, so is this the attitude which is incumbent on each unit of the nation, each family, as an integral part of the whole. Here is the simple and natural realisation of the noble dream of *Fraternity*: each individual attached to a family by ties of love where not of blood; the families united in a federal bond to form the nation; the nations confederate in love and emulous in virtue, and all, nations and their families, playing their several parts as little children about the feet and under the smile of the Almighty Father. Here is the divine order which every family is called upon to fulfil; a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and, therefore, it matters infinitely that every family should realise the nature and the obligations of the family bond. As water cannot rise above its source, neither can we live at a higher level than that of the conception we form of our place and use in life. Let us ask the question—has this, of regarding all education and all civil and social relations from the standpoint of the *family*, any practical outcome? So much so, that perhaps there is hardly a problem of life for which it does not contain the solution. For example:—What shall we teach our children? Is there one subject that claims our attention more than another? Yes, there is a subject or class of subjects which has an imperative *moral* claim upon us. It is the duty of the nation to maintain relations of

brotherly kindness with other nations; therefore, it is the duty of every family, as an integral part of the nation, to be able to hold brotherly speech with the families of other nations as opportunities arise; therefore, to acquire the speech of neighbouring nations is not only to secure an inlet of knowledge and a means of culture, but is a duty of that higher morality (the morality of the family) which aims at universal brotherhood; therefore, every family would do well to cultivate two languages besides the mother tongue, even in the nursery.

Again; a fair young Englishwoman was staying with her mother at a German *Kurhaus*. They were the only English people present, and probably forgot that the Germans are better linguists than we. The young lady sat through the long meals with her book, hardly interrupting her reading to eat, and addressing no more than one or two remarks to her mother, as—"I wonder what that mess is!" or, "How much longer shall we have to sit with these tiresome people?" Had she remembered that no family can live to itself, that she and her mother represented England, *were* England for that little German community, she would have imitated the courteous greetings which the German ladies bestowed on their neighbours.

But we must leave further consideration of this great subject, and conclude with a striking passage from Mr. Morley's 'Appreciation' of *Emile*. "Education slowly came to be thought of in connection with the family. The improvement of ideas upon education was only one phase of the great general movement towards the restoration of the family, which was so striking a spectacle in France after the middle of the century. Education now came to

comprehend the whole system of the relations between parents and their children, from earliest infancy to maturity. The direction of such wider feeling about these relations tended strongly towards an increased closeness in them, more intimacy, and a more continuous suffusion of tenderness and long attachment." His labours in this great cause, "the restoration of the family," give Rousseau a claim upon the gratitude and respect of mankind. It has proved a lasting, solid work. To this day, family relations in France are more gracious, more tender, more close and more inclusive, than they are with us. They are more expansive too, leading to generally benign and friendly behaviour; and so strong and satisfying is the family bond, that the young people find little necessity to 'fall in love.' The mother lays herself out for the friendship of her young daughters, who respond with entire loyalty and devotion; and, Zola notwithstanding, French maidens are wonderfully pure, simple, and sweet, because their affections are abundantly satisfied.

Possibly "the restoration of the family" is a labour that invites us here in England, each within the radius of our own hearth; for there is little doubt that the family bond is more lax amongst us than it was two or three generations ago. Perhaps nowhere is family life of more idyllic loveliness than where we see it at its best in English homes. But the wise ever find some new thing to learn. Though a nation, as an individual, must act on the lines of its own character, and we are, on the whole, well content with our English homes, yet we might learn something from the inclusiveness of the French family, where mother-in-law and father-in-law, aunt and cousins, widow and spinster, are cherished, and a hundred small offices



devised for dependants who would be in the way in an English home. The result is that the children have a wider range for the practice of the thousand sweet attentions and self-restraints which make home life lovely. No doubt the medal has its obverse; there is probably much in French home life which we should shrink from; nevertheless, it offers object lessons which we should do well to study. Again, where family life is most beautiful with us, is not the family a little apt to become self-centred and self-sufficient, rather than to cultivate that expansiveness towards other families which is part of the family code of our neighbours?

## CHAPTER II

### *PARENTS AS RULERS*

LET us continue our consideration of the family as the nation in miniature, with the responsibilities, the rights, and the requirements of the nation. The parents represent the "Government"; but, here, the government is ever an absolute Monarchy, conditioned very loosely by the law of the land, but very closely by that law more or less of which every parent bears engraved on his conscience. Some attain the levels of high thinking, and come down from the Mount with beaming countenance and the tables of the law intact; others fail to reach the difficult heights, and are content with such fragments of the broken tables as they pick up below. But be his knowledge of the law little or much, no parent escapes the call to rule.

Now, the first thing we ask for in a ruler is, "Is he able to rule? Does he know how to maintain his authority?" A ruler who fails to govern is like an unjust judge, an impious priest, an ignorant teacher, that is, he fails in the essential attribute of his office. This is even more true in the family than in the State; the king may rule by deputy; but, here we see the exigent nature of the parent's functions; he can have no deputy. Helpers he may have, but the moment he makes over his functions and authority to another, the rights of parenthood belong to that

other, and not to him. Who does not know of the heart-burnings that arise when Anglo-Indian parents come home, to find their children's affections given to others, their duty owing to others; and they, the parents, sources of pleasure like the godmother of the fairy tale, but having no authority over their children? And all this, nobody's fault, for the guardians at home have done their best to keep the children loyal to the parents abroad.

Here is indicated a rock upon which the heads of families sometimes make shipwreck. They regard parental authority as inherent in them, a property which may lie dormant, but is not to be separated from the state of parenthood. They may allow their children from infancy upwards to do what is right in their own eyes; and then, Lear turns and makes his plaint to the winds, and cries—

“Sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child!”

But Lear has been all the time divesting himself of the honour and authority that belong to him, and giving his rights to the children. Here he tells us why; the biting anguish is the “*thankless*” child. He has been laying himself out for the thanks of his children. That they should think him a fond father, has been more to him than the duty he owes them; and in proportion as he omits his duty are they oblivious of theirs. Possibly the unregulated love of approbation in devoted parents has more share in the undoing of families than any other single cause. A writer of to-day represents a mother as saying—

“But you are not afraid of me, Bessie?”

“No indeed; who could be afraid of a dear, sweet, soft, little mother like you?”

And such praise is sweet in the ears of many a fond mother hungering for the love and liking of her children, and not perceiving that words like these in the mouth of a child are as treasonable as words of defiance.

Authority is laid down at other shrines than that of popularity. Prospero describes himself as,

“all dedicate  
To study, and the bettering of my mind.”

And, meantime, the exercise of authority devolves upon Antonio ; is it any wonder that the habit of authority fits the usurper like a glove, and that Prospero finds himself ousted from the office he failed to fill ? Even so, the busy parent, occupied with many cares, awakes to find the authority he has failed to wield has dropped out of his hands ; perhaps has been picked up by others less fit, and a daughter is given over to the charge of a neighbouring family, while father and mother hunt for rare prints.

In other cases, the love of an easy life tempts parents to let things take their course ; the children are good children, and won't go far wrong, we are told ; and very likely it is true. But however good the children be, the parents owe it to society to make them better than they are, and to bless the world with people, not merely good-natured and well-disposed, but good of set purpose and endeavour.

The love of ease, the love of favour, the claims of other work, are only some of the causes which lead to a result disastrous to society—the *abdication of parents*. When we come to consider the nature and uses of the parents' authority, we shall see that such abdication is as immoral as it is mischievous. Meantime, it is well worth while to notice that the causes

which lead parents to resign the position of domestic rulers are resolvable into one—the office is too troublesome, too laborious. The temptation which assails parents is the same which has led many a crowned head to seek ease in the cloister—

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,”

if it be the natural crown of parenthood.

The Apostolic counsel of “diligence” in ruling throws light upon the nature and aim of authority: it is no longer a matter of personal honour and dignity; authority is for use and service, and the honour that goes with it is only for the better service of those under authority. The arbitrary parent, the exacting parent, who claims this and that of deference and duty because he is a parent, all for his own honour and glory, is more hopelessly in the wrong than the parent who practically abdicates; the majesty of parenthood is hedged round with observances only because it is good for the children to “faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey” their natural rulers. Only at home can children be trained in the chivalrous temper of “proud submission and dignified obedience;” and if the parents do not inspire and foster deference, reverence, and loyalty, how shall these crowning graces of character thrive in a hard and emulous world?

It is perhaps a little difficult to maintain an attitude of authority in these democratic days, when even educationalists counsel that children be treated on equal terms from the very beginning; but the children themselves come to our aid; the sweet humility and dependence natural to them fosters the gentle dignity, the *soupeçon* of reserve, which is becoming in parents. It is not open to parents either to lay aside or to sink under the burden of the honour laid upon them; and,



no doubt, we have all seen the fullest, freest flow of confidence, sympathy, and love between parent and child, where the mother sits as a queen among her children and the father is honoured as a crowned head. The fact that there are two parents, each to lend honour to the other, yet free from restraint in each other's presence, makes it the easier to maintain the impalpable "state" of parenthood. And the presence of the slight, sweet, undefined feeling of dignity in the household is the very first condition for the bringing up of loyal, honourable men and women, capable of reverence and apt to win respect.

The foundation of parental authority lies in the fact that parents hold office as deputies; and that, in a two-fold sense. In the first place, they are the immediate and personally appointed deputies of the Almighty King, the sole Ruler of men; they have not only to fulfil His counsels regarding the children, but to represent His Person; his parents are as God to the little child, and, yet more constraining thought, *God is to him what his parents are*; he has no power to conceive a greater and lovelier personality than that of the royal heads of his own home; he makes his first approach to the Infinite through them; they are his measure for the highest; if the measure be easily within his small compass, how shall he grow up with the reverent temper which is the condition of spiritual growth?

More; parents hold their children in trust for society. "My own child" can only be true in a limited sense; the children are held as a public trust to be trained as is best for the welfare of the community; and in this sense, also, the parents are persons in authority, with the dignity of their office to support, and are even liable to deposition. The one State whose name

has passed into a proverb, standing for a group of virtues which we have no other word to describe, is a State which practically deprived parents of the functions which they failed to fulfil to the furtherance of public virtue. No doubt the State reserves to itself virtually the power to bring up its own children in its own way, with the least possible co-operation of parents. Even to-day, a neighbouring nation has elected to charge itself with the training of its infants. So soon as they can crawl, or sooner, before ever they run or speak, they are to be brought to the "Maternal School," and carefully nurtured, as with mother's milk, in the virtues proper for a citizen. The scheme is as yet but in the experimental stage, but will doubtless be carried through, because the nation in question has long ago discovered—and acted consistently upon the discovery—that what you would have the man become, that you must train the child to be.

Perhaps such public deposition of parents is the last calamity that can befall a nation. These poor little ones are to grow up in a world where the name of God is not to be named; to grow up, too, without the training in filial duty and brotherly love and neighbourly kindness which falls to the children of all but the few unnatural parents. They may be returned to their parents at certain hours or after certain years; but once alienation has been set up, once the strongest and sweetest tie has been loosened and the parents have been publicly delivered from their duty, the desecration of the home is complete; and we shall have the spectacle of a people growing up orphaned almost from their birth. This is a new thing in the world's history, for even Lycurgus left the children to their parents for the first half-dozen years of life. Certain newspapers commend the

example for our imitation, but God forbid that we should ever lose faith in the blessedness of family life. Parents who hold their children as, at the same time, a public trust and a divine trust, and who recognise the authority they hold as *deputed* authority, not to be trifled with, laid aside, or abused—such parents preserve for the nation the immunities of home, and safeguard the privileges of their order.

Having seen that it does not rest with the parents to use, or to forego the use of, the authority they hold, let us examine the limitations and the scope of this authority. In the first place, it is to be maintained and exercised solely for the advantage of the children, whether in mind, body, or estate. And here is room for the nice discrimination, the delicate intuitions, with which parents are blessed. The mother, who makes her growing-up daughter take the out-of-door exercise she needs, is acting within her powers. The father of quiet habits, who discourages society for his young people, is considering his own tastes, and not their needs, and is making unlawful use of his authority.

Again, the authority of parents, though the deference it begets remain to grace the relations of parents and child, is itself a provisional function, and is only successful as it encourages the *autonomy*, if we may call it so, of the child. A single decision made by the parents which the child is, or should be, capable of making for itself, is an encroachment on the rights of the child, and a transgression on the part of the parents.

Once more, the authority of parents rests on a secure foundation only as they keep well before the children that it is deputed authority; the child who knows that he is being brought up for the service of

the nation, that his parents are acting under a Divine commission, will not turn out a rebellious son.

Further, though the emancipation of the children is gradual, they acquiring day by day more of the art and science of self-government, yet there comes a day when the parents' right to rule is over; there is nothing left for the parents but to abdicate gracefully, and leave their grown-up sons and daughters absolutely free agents, even though these still live at home; and although, in the eyes of their parents, they are not fit to be trusted with the ordering of themselves: if they fail in such self-ordering, whether as regards time, occupations, money, friends, most likely their parents are to blame for not having introduced them by degrees to the full liberty which is their right as men and women. Anyway, it is too late now to keep them in training; fit or unfit, they must hold the rudder for themselves.

As for the employment of authority, the highest art lies in ruling without seeming to do so. The law is a terror to evil-doers, but for the praise of them that do well; and in the family, as in the State, the best government is that in which peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, are maintained without the intervention of the law. Happy is the household that has few rules, and where "Mother does not like this," and "Father wishes that," are all-constraining.

## CHAPTER III

### PARENTS AS INSPIRERS

#### PART I

M. ADOLF MONOD claims that the child must owe to his mother a second birth—the first into the natural, the second into the spiritual life of the intelligence and moral sense. Had he not been writing of women and for women, no doubt he would have affirmed that the long travail of this second birth must be undergone equally by both parents. Do we ask how he arrives at this rather startling theory? He observes that great men have great mothers; mothers, that is, blest with an infinite capacity for taking pains with their work of bringing up children. He likens this labour to a second bearing which launches the child into a higher life; and as this higher life is a more blessed life, he contends that every child has a right to this birth into completer being *at the hands of his parents*. Did his conclusions rest solely upon the deductive methods he pursues, we might afford to let them pass, and trouble ourselves very little about this second birth, which parents may, and oftentimes do, withhold from their natural offspring. We, too, could bring forward our contrary instances of good parents with bad sons, and indifferent parents with earnest children; and, pat to



our lips, would come the *Cui bono?* which absolves us from endeavour.

Be a good mother to your son because great men have good mothers, is inspiring, stimulating; but is not to be received as the final word. For an appeal of irresistible urgency, we look to natural science with her inductive methods; though we are still waiting her last word, what she has already said is law and gospel for the believing parent. The parable of Pandora's box is true to-day; and a woman may in her heedlessness let fly upon her offspring a thousand ills. But is there not also "a glass of blessings standing by," into which parents may dip, and bring forth for their children health and vigour, justice and mercy, truth and beauty?

"Surely," it may be objected, "every good and perfect gift comes from God above, and the human parent sins presumptuously who thinks to bestow gifts divine." Now this lingering superstition has no part nor lot with true religion, but, on the contrary, brings upon it the scandal of many an ill-ordered home and ill-regulated family. When we perceive that God uses men and women, parents above all others, as vehicles for the transmission of His gifts, and that it is in the keeping of His law He is honoured—more than in the attitude of the courtier waiting for exceptional favours—then we shall take the trouble to comprehend the law, written not only upon tables of stone and rolls of parchment, but upon the fleshly tablets of the living organisms of the children; and, understanding the law, we shall see with thanksgiving and enlargement of heart in what *natural* ways God does indeed show mercy unto thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments.

But His commandment is exceeding broad; be-



comes broader year by year with every revelation of science; and we had need gird up the loins of our mind to keep pace with this current revelation. We shall be at pains, too, to keep ourselves in that attitude of expectant attention wherein we shall be enabled to perceive the unity and continuity of this revelation with that of the written Word of God. For perhaps it is only as we are able to receive the two, and harmonise the two in a willing and obedient heart, that we shall enter on the heritage of glad and holy living which is the will of God for us.

Let us, for example, consider, in the light of current scientific thought, the processes and the methods of this second birth, which, according to M. Monod, the child claims at the hands of his parents. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is not only a pledge, but is a statement of a result arrived at by deductive processes. The writer had great opportunities for collecting data; he had watched many children grow up, and his experience taught him to divide them into two classes—the well-brought up, who turned out well; and the ill-brought up, who turned out ill. No doubt, then, as now, there were startling exceptions, and—the exception proves the rule.

But, here as elsewhere, the promises and threatenings of the Bible will bear the searching light of inductive processes. We may ask, Why should this be so? and not content ourselves with a general answer, that this is natural and right: we may search until we discover that this result is inevitable, and no other result conceivable (except for alien influences), and our obedience will be in exact proportion to our perception of the inevitableness of the law.

The vast sum of what we understand by heredity is

not to be taken into account in the consideration of this second birth; by the first natural birth it is, that "his father and mother, his grandfather and grandmother, are latent or declare themselves in the child; and it is on the lines thus laid down in his nature that his development will proceed. It is not by virtue of education so much as by virtue of inheritance that he is brave or timid, generous or selfish, prudent or reckless, boastful or modest, quick or placid in temper; the ground tone of his character is original in him, and it colours all the subsequently formed emotions and their sympathetic ideas. . . . The influence of systematic culture upon any one is no doubt great, but that which determines the limit, and even in some degree the nature of the effects of culture, that which forms the foundations upon which all the modifications of art must rest, is the inherited nature."

If heredity means so much, if, as would seem at the first glance, the child comes into the world with his character ready-made, what remains for the parents to do but to enable him to work out his own salvation without let or hindrance of their making, upon the lines of his individuality? The strong naturalism, shall we call it, of our day, inclines us to take this view of the objects and limitations of education; and without doubt it is a gospel; it is the truth; but it is not the whole truth. The child brings with him into the world, not character, but disposition. He has tendencies which may need only to be strengthened, or, again, to be diverted, or even repressed. His character—the efflorescence of the man wherein the fruit of his life is a-preparing—character is original disposition, modified, directed, expanded by education, by circumstances, later, by self-control and self-culture, above all, by the supreme agency of the Holy Ghost,

even where that agency is little suspected, and as little solicited.

How is this great work of character-making—the single effectual labour possible to human beings—to be carried on? We shall rest our inquiries on a physiological basis; the lowest, doubtless, but therefore the foundation of the rest. The first-floor chambers of the psychologist are pleasant places, but who would begin to build with the first floor? What would he rear it upon? Surely the arbitrary distinction between the grey matter of the brain and the “mind” (or thoughts or feelings) which plays upon it, even as the song upon the vocal chords of the singer, is more truly materialistic than is the recognition of the pregnant truth that the brain is the mere organ of the spiritual part, registering and effecting every movement of thought and feeling, whether conscious or unconscious, by appreciable molecular movement, and sustaining the infinite activities of mind by corresponding enormous activity and enormous waste; that it is the organ of mind, which, under present conditions, is absolutely inseparable from, and indispensable to, the quickening spirit. Once we recognise that in the thinking of a thought there is as distinct motion set up in some tract of the brain as there is in the muscles of the hand employed in writing a sentence, we shall see that the behaviour of the grey nerve-substance of the cerebrum should afford the one possible key to certitude and system in our attempts at education, using the word in the most worthy sense—as its concern is the formation of character.

Having heard Dr. Maudsley on the subject of heredity, let us hear him again on this other subject, which practically enables us to define the possibilities of education.

“That which has existed with any completeness in consciousness leaves behind it, after its disappearance therefrom, in the mind or brain, a functional disposition to its reproduction or reappearance in consciousness at some future time. Of no mental act can we say that it is ‘writ in water;’ something remains from it, whereby its recurrence is facilitated. Every impression of sense upon the brain, every current of molecular activity from one to another part of the brain, every cerebral action which passes into muscular movement, leaves behind it some modification of the nerve elements concerned in its function, some after-effect, or, so to speak, memory of itself in them which renders its reproduction an easier matter, the more easy the more often it has been repeated, and makes it impossible to say that, however trivial, it shall not under some circumstances recur. Let the excitation take place in one of two nerve cells lying side by side, and between which there was not any original specific difference, there will be ever afterwards a difference between them. This physiological process, whatever be its nature, is the physical basis of memory, and it is the foundation of the development of all our mental functions.

“That modification which persists, or is retained, in structure after functions, has been differently described as a residuum, or relic, or trace, or disposition, or vestige; or again as potential, latent, or dormant idea. Not only definite ideas, but all affections of the nervous system, feelings of pleasure and pain, desire, and even its outward reactions, thus leave behind them their structural effects, and lay the foundation of modes of thought, feeling, and action. Particular talents are sometimes formed quite, or almost quite, involuntarily; and complex actions, which were first consciously

performed by dint of great application, become automatic by repetition; ideas which were at first consciously associated, ultimately coalesce and call one another up without any consciousness, as we see in the quick perception or intuition of the man of large worldly experience; and feelings, once active, leave behind them their large unconscious residua, thus affecting the generation of the character, so that, apart from the original or inborn nature of the individual, contentment, melancholy, cowardice, bravery, and even moral feeling are generated as the results of particular life-experiences."

Here we have sketched out a magnificent educational charter. It is as well, perhaps, that we do not realise the extent of our liberties; if we did, it may be, such a fervour of educational enthusiasm would seize us, that we should behave as did those early Christians who every day expected the coming of the Lord. How should a man have patience to buy and sell and get gain had it been revealed to him that he was able to paint the greatest picture ever painted? And we, with the enthralling vision of what our little child might become under our hands, how should we have patience for common toils? That science should have revealed the *rationale* of education in our day is possibly the Divine recognition that we have become more fit for the task, because we have come to an increasing sense of moral responsibility. What would it be for an immoral people to discern fully the possibilities of education? But how slow we are! how—

"Custom lies upon us with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!"

It is now more than five-and-twenty years since these words of Dr. Maudsley, and many of like force



by other physiologists, were published to the world. We have purposely chosen words that have stood the test of time ; for to-day a hundred eminent scientific men, at home and abroad, are proclaiming the same truths. Every scientist believes them ! And we ? We go on after our use and wont, as if nothing had been said ; dropping, hour by hour, out of careless hands, seeds of corn and hemlock, of bramble and rose.

Let us run over the charter of our liberties, as Dr. Maudsley sums them up.

We may lay the physical basis of memory : while the wide-eyed babe stretches his little person with aimless kickings on his rug, he is receiving unconsciously those first impressions which form his earliest memories ; and we can order those memories for him : we can see that the earliest sights he sees are sights of order, neatness, beauty ; that the sounds his ear drinks in are musical and soft, tender and joyous ; that the baby nostrils sniff only delicate purity and sweetness. These memories remain through life, engraved on the unthinking brain. As we shall see later, memories have a certain power of accretion—where there are some others of a like kind gather, and all the life is ordered on the lines of these first pure and tender memories.

We may lay the foundation of the development of all the mental functions. Are there children who do not wonder, or revere, or care for fairy tales, or think wise child-thoughts ? Perhaps there are not ; but if there are, it is because the fertilising pollen grain has never been conveyed to the ovule waiting for it in the child's soul.

These are some of the things that—according to the citations we have given from Dr. Maudsley's *Physiology*



*of Mind*—his parents may settle for the future man, even in his early childhood :—

His definite ideas upon particular subjects, as, for example, his relations with other people.

His habits, of neatness or disorder, of punctuality, of moderation.

His general modes of thought, as affected by altruism or egoism.

His consequent modes of feeling and action.

His objects of thought—the small affairs of daily life, the natural world, the operations or the productions of the human mind, the ways of God with men.

His distinguishing talent—music, eloquence, invention.

His disposition or tone of character, as it shows itself in and affects his family and other close relations in life—reserved or frank, morose or genial, melancholy or cheerful, cowardly or brave.

## CHAPTER IV

### PARENTS AS INSPIRERS

#### PART II

“Sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.”—THACKERAY.

THE last chapter closed with an imperfect summary of what we may call the educational functions of parents. We found that it rests with the parents of the child to settle for the future man his ways of thinking, behaving, feeling, acting; his disposition, his particular talent; the manner of things upon which his thoughts shall run. Who shall fix limitations to the power of parents? The destiny of the child is ruled by his parents, because they have the virgin soil all to themselves. The first sowing must be at their hands, or at the hands of such as they choose to depute.

What do they sow? *Ideas*. We cannot too soon recognise what is the sole educational instrument we have to work with, and how this one instrument is to be handled. But how radically wrong is all our thought upon education! We cannot use the fit words because we do not think the right thing. For example, an *idea* is not an “instrument,” but an agent; is not to be “handled,” but, shall we say, set in motion? We have perhaps got over the educational misconception of the *tabula rasa*. No one now looks on the child’s white soul as a tablet prepared for the exercise of the educator’s supreme art. But the conception

which has succeeded this time-honoured heresy rests on the same false bases of the august office and the infallible wisdom of the educator. Here it is in its cruder form : " Pestalozzi aimed more at harmoniously developing the faculties than at making use of them for the acquirement of knowledge ; he sought to prepare the vase rather than to fill it." In the hands of Froebel the figure gains in boldness and beauty ; it is no longer a mere vase to be shaped under the potter's fingers ; but a flower, say, a perfect rose, to be delicately and consciously and methodically moulded, petal by petal, curve and curl ; for the perfume and living glory of the flower, why these will come ; do you your part and mould the several petals ; wait, too, upon sunshine and shower, give space and place for your blossom to expand. And so we go to work with a touch to " imagination " here, and to " judgment " there ; now, to the " perceptive faculties," now, to the " conceptive ;" in this, aiming at the moral, and in this, at the intellectual nature of the child ; touching into being, petal by petal, the flower of a perfect life under the genial influences of sunny looks and happy moods. This reading of the meaning of education and of the work of the educator is very fascinating, and it calls forth singular zeal and self-devotion on the part of those gardeners whose plants are the children. Perhaps, indeed, this of the Kindergarten is the one vital conception of education we have had hitherto.

But in these days of revolutionary thought, when all along the line—in geology and anthropology, chemistry, philology, and biology—science is changing front, it is necessary that we should reconsider our conception of Education. We are taught, for example, that " heredity " is by no means the simple and direct transmission, from parent, or remote ancestor, to child of power and proclivity, virtue and defect ; and we

breathe freer, because we had begun to suspect that if this were so, it would mean to most of us an inheritance of exaggerated defects : imbecility, insanity, congenital disease—are they utterly removed from any one of us? So of education, we begin to ask, Is its work so purely formative as we thought? Is it directly formative at all? How much is there in this pleasing and easy doctrine, that the drawing forth and strengthening and directing of the several “faculties” is education? Parents are very jealous over the individuality of their children; they mistrust the tendency to develop all on the same plan; and this instinctive jealousy is right; for, supposing that education really did consist in systematised efforts to draw out every power that is in us, why, we should all develop on the same lines, be as like as “two peas,” and (should we not?) die of weariness of one another! Some of us have an uneasy sense that things are tending towards this deadly sameness. But, indeed, the fear is groundless. We may believe that the personality, the individuality, of each of us, is too dear to God, and too necessary to a complete humanity, to be left at the mercy of empirics. We are absolutely safe, and the tenderest child is fortified against a battering-ram of educational forces.

The problem of education is more complex than it seems at first sight, and well for us and the world that it is so. “Education is a life;” you may stunt and starve and kill, or you may cherish and sustain; but the beating of the heart, the movement of the lungs, and the development of the faculties (are there any “faculties”?) are only indirectly our care. The poverty of our thought on the subject of education is shown by the fact that we have no word which at all implies the sustaining of a *life*: education (*e*, out, and

*ducere*, to lead, to draw) is very inadequate ; it covers no more than those occasional gymnastics of the mind which correspond with those by which the limbs are trained : training (*trahere*) is almost synonymous, and upon these two words rests the misconception that the development and the exercise of the "faculties" is the object of education (we must needs use the word for want of a better). Our homely Saxon "bringing up" is nearer the truth, perhaps because of its very vagueness ; any way, "up" implies an *aim*, and "bringing" an *effort*.

The happy phrase of Mr. Matthew Arnold—"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life"—is perhaps the most complete and adequate definition of education we possess. It is a great thing to have said it ; and our wiser posterity may see in that "profound and exquisite remark" the fruition of a lifetime of critical effort. Observe how it covers the question from the three conceivable points of view. Subjectively, in the child, education is a life ; objectively, as affecting the child, education is a discipline ; relatively, if we may introduce a third term, as regards the environment of the child, education is an atmosphere.

We shall examine each of these postulates later ; at present we shall attempt no more than to clear the ground a little, with a view to the subject of this paper, "Parents as Inspirers"—not "modellers," but "inspirers."

It is only as we recognise our limitations that our work becomes effective : when we see definitely what we are to do, what we can do, and what we cannot do, we set to work with confidence and courage ; we have an end in view, and we make our way intelligently towards that end, and a *way to an end* is *method*. It rests with parents not only to give their children



birth into the life of intelligence and moral power, but to sustain the higher life which they have borne. Now that life, which we call education, receives only one kind of sustenance; it grows upon *ideas*. You may go through years of so-called "education" without getting a single vital idea; and that is why many a well-fed body carries about a feeble, starved intelligence; and no society for the prevention of cruelty to children cries shame on the parents. Only the other day we heard of a girl of fifteen who had spent two years at a school without taking part in a single lesson, and this by the express desire of her mother, who wished all her time and all her pains to be given to "fancy needlework." This, no doubt, is a survival (not of the fittest), but it is possible to pass even the Universities' Local Examinations with credit, without ever having experienced that vital stir which marks the inception of an idea; and, if we have succeeded in escaping this disturbing influence, why we have "finished our education" when we leave school; we shut up our books and our minds, and remain pigmies in the dark forest of our own dim world of thought and feeling.

What is an idea? A live thing of the mind, according to the older philosophers, from Plato to Bacon, from Bacon to Coleridge. We say of an idea that it strikes us, impresses us, seizes us, takes possession of us, rules us; and our common speech is, as usual, truer to fact than the conscious thought which it expresses. We do not in the least exaggerate in ascribing this sort of action and power to an idea. We form an *ideal*—a, so to speak, embodied idea—and our ideal exercises the very strongest formative influence upon us. Why do you devote yourself to this pursuit, that cause? "Because twenty years ago such and such an idea *struck* me," is the sort of history



which might be given of every purposeful life—every life devoted to the working out of an idea. Now is it not marvellous that, recognising as we do the potency of an idea, both the word and the conception it covers enter so little into our thought of education?

Coleridge brings the conception of an “idea” within the sphere of the scientific thought of to-day; not as that thought is expressed in *Psychology*—a term which he himself launched upon the world with an apology for it as an *insolens verbum*,\* but in that science of the correlation and interaction of mind and brain, which is at present rather clumsily expressed in such terms as “mental physiology” and “psycho-physiology.”

In his method he gives us the following illustration of the rise and progress of an idea:—

“We can recall no incident of human history that impresses the imagination more deeply than the moment when Columbus, on an unknown ocean, first perceived that startling fact, the change of the magnetic needle. How many such instances occur in history, when the ideas of nature (presented to chosen minds by a Higher Power than Nature herself) suddenly unfold, as it were, in prophetic succession, systematic views destined to produce the most important revolutions in the state of man! The clear spirit of Columbus was doubtless eminently *methodical*. He saw distinctly that great leading *idea* which authorised the poor pilot to become a ‘promiser of kingdoms.’”

Notice the genesis of such ideas—“presented to chosen minds by a Higher Power than Nature;” notice how accurately this history of an idea fits in with what we know of the history of great inventions and discoveries, with that of the *ideas* which rule our

\* “We beg pardon for the use of this *insolens verbum*, but it is one of which our language stands in great need.”—S. T. COLERIDGE.

own lives; and how well does it correspond with that key to the origin of "practical" ideas which we find elsewhere:—

"Doth the plowman plow continually to . . . open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and put in the wheat in rows, and the barley in the appointed place, and the spelt in the border thereof? For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him. . . .

"Bread corn is ground; for he will not ever be threshing it. . . . This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom." \*

Ideas may invest as an atmosphere, rather than strike as a weapon. "The idea may exist in a clear, distinct definite form, as that of a circle in the mind of a geometrician; or it may be a mere instinct, a vague appetency towards something, . . . like the impulse which fills the young poet's eyes with tears, he knows not why." To excite this "appetency towards something"—towards things lovely, honest, and of good report, is the earliest and most important ministry of the educator. How shall these indefinite ideas which manifest themselves in appetency be imparted? They are not to be given of set purpose, nor taken at set times. They are held in that thought-environment which surrounds the child as an atmosphere, which he breathes as his breath of life; and this atmosphere in which the child inspires his unconscious ideas of right living emanates from his parents. Every look of gentleness and tone of reverence, every word of kindness and act of help, passes into the thought-environment, the very atmosphere which the child

\* Isaiah xxviii.

breathes ; he does not think of these things, may never think of them, but all his life long they excite that "vague appetency towards something" out of which most of his actions spring. Oh ! the wonderful and dreadful presence of the little child in the midst.

That he should take direction and inspiration from all the casual life about him, should make our poor words and ways the starting-point from which, and in the direction of which, he develops—this is a thought which makes the most of us hold our breath. There is no way of escape for parents ; they must needs be as "inspirers" to their children, because about them hangs, as its atmosphere about a planet, the thought-environment of the child, from which he derives those enduring ideas which express themselves as a life-long "appetency" towards things sordid or things lovely, things earthly or divine.

Let us now hear Coleridge on the subject of those *definite* ideas which are not inhaled as air, but conveyed as meat to the mind :—\*

"From the first, or initiative idea, as from a seed, successive ideas germinate."

"Events and images, the lively and spirit-stirring machinery of the external world, are like light, and air, and moisture to the seed of the mind, which would else rot and perish."

"The paths in which we may pursue a methodical course are manifold, and at the head of each stands its peculiar and guiding idea."

"Those ideas are as regularly subordinate in dignity as the paths to which they point are various and eccentric in direction. The world has suffered much, in modern times, from a subversion of the natural and necessary order of Science . . . from summoning

\* *Method*—S. T. COLERIDGE.

reason and faith to the bar of that limited physical experience to which, by the true laws of method, they owe no obedience."

"Progress follows the path of the idea from which it sets out ; requiring, however, a constant wakefulness of mind to keep it within the due limits of its course. Hence the orbits of thought, so to speak, must differ among themselves as the initiative ideas differ."

Have we not here the corollary to, and the explanation of, that law of unconscious cerebration which results in our "ways of thinking," which shapes our character, rules our destiny ? Thoughtful minds consider that the new light which biology is throwing upon the laws of mind is bringing to the front once more the Platonic doctrine, that "An idea is a distinguishable power, self-affirmed, and seen in its unity with the Eternal Essence."

The whole subject is profound, but as practical as it is profound. We absolutely must disabuse our minds of the theory that the functions of education are, in the main, gymnastic. In the early years of the child's life it makes, perhaps, little apparent difference whether his parents start with the notion that to educate is to fill a receptacle, inscribe a tablet, mould plastic matter, or nourish a life ; but in the end we shall find that only those *ideas* which have fed his life are taken into the being of the child ; all the rest is thrown away, or worse, is like sawdust in the system, an impediment and an injury to the vital processes.

This is, perhaps, how the educational formula should run : Education is a life ; that life is sustained on ideas ; ideas are of spiritual origin ; but,

"God has made us so,"

that we get them chiefly as we convey them to one

another. The duty of parents is to sustain a child's inner life with ideas as they sustain his body with food. The child is an eclectic ; he may choose this or that ; therefore, in the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

The child has affinities with evil as well as with good ; therefore, hedge him about from any chance lodgment of evil suggestion.

The initial idea begets subsequent ideas ; therefore, take care that children get right primary ideas on the great relations and duties of life.

Every study, every line of thought, has its "guiding idea ;" therefore the study of a child makes for living education, as it is quickened by the guiding idea "which stands at the head."

In a word, our much boasted "infallible reason"—is it not the involuntary thought which follows the initial idea upon necessary logical lines ? Given, the starting idea, and the conclusion may be predicated almost to a certainty. We get into the *way* of thinking such and such manner of thoughts, and of coming to such and such conclusions, ever further and further removed from the starting-point, but on the same lines. There is structural adaptation in the brain tissue to the manner of thoughts we think—a plan and a way for them to run in. Thus we see how the destiny of a life is shaped in the nursery, by the reverent naming of the Divine Name ; by the light scoff at holy things ; by the thought of duty the little child gets who is made to finish conscientiously his little task ; by the hardness of heart that comes to the child who hears the faults or sorrows of others spoken of lightly.



## CHAPTER V

### *PARENTS AS INSPIRERS*

#### PART III

IT is probable that parents as a class feel more than ever before the responsibility of their prophetic office. It is as revealers of God to their children that parents touch their highest limitations ; perhaps it is only as they succeed in this part of their work that they fulfil the Divine intention in giving them children to bring up—in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

How to fortify the children against the doubts of which the air is full, is an anxious question. Three courses are open—to teach as we of an older generation have been taught, and to let them bide their time and their chance ; to attempt to deal with the doubts and difficulties which have turned up, or are likely to turn up ; or, to give children such hold upon vital truth, and, at the same time, such an outlook upon current thought, that they shall be landed on the safe side of the controversies of their day, open to truth, in however new a light presented, and safeguarded against mortal error.

The first course is unfair to the young : when the attack comes, they find themselves at a disadvantage ; they have nothing to reply ; their pride is in arms ; they jump to the conclusion that there is no defence possible of that which they have received as truth ;



had there been, would they not have been instructed to make it? They resent being made out in the wrong, being on the weaker side—so it seems to them,—being behind their times; and they go over without a struggle to the side of the most aggressive thinkers of their day.

Let us suppose that, on the other hand, they have been fortified with “Christian Evidences,” defended by bulwarks of sound dogmatic teaching. Religion without definite dogmatic teaching degenerates into sentiment, but dogma, as dogma, offers no defence against the assaults of unbelief. As for “evidences,” the *rôle* of the Christian apologist is open to the imputation conveyed in the keen proverb, *qui s'excuse, s'accuse*; the truth by which we live must needs be self-evidenced, admitting of neither proof nor disproof. Children should be taught Bible history with every elucidation which modern research makes possible. But they should not be taught to think of the inscriptions on the Assyrian monuments, for example, as *proofs* of the truth of the Bible records, but rather as illustrations, though they are, and cannot but be subsidiary proofs.

Let us look at the third course; and first, as regards the outlook upon current thought. Contemporary opinion is the fetish of the young mind. Young people are eager to know what to think on all the serious questions of religion and life. They ask what is the opinion of this and that leading thinker of their day. They by no means confine themselves to such leaders of thought as their parents have elected to follow; on the contrary, the “other side” of every question is the attractive side for them, and they do not choose to be behind the foremost in the race of thought.

Now, that their young people should thus take to

the water need not come upon parents as a surprise. The whole training from babyhood upward should be in view of this plunge. When the time comes, there is nothing to be done ; openly, it may be, secretly if the home rule is rigid, the young folk think their own thoughts ; that is, they follow the leader they have elected ; for they are truly modest and humble at heart, and do not yet venture to think for themselves ; only they have transferred their allegiance. Nor is this transfer of allegiance to be resented by parents ; we all claim this kind of "suffrage" in our turn when we feel ourselves included in larger interests than those of the family.

But there is much to be done beforehand, though nothing when the time comes. The notion that any contemporary authority is infallible may be steadily undermined from infancy onwards, though at some sacrifice of ease and glory to the parents. "I don't know" must take the place of the vague wise-sounding answer, the random shot which children's pertinacious questionings too often provoke. And "I don't know" should be followed by the effort to know, the research necessary to find out. Even then, the possibility of error in a "printed book" must occasionally be faced. The results of this kind of training in the way of mental balance and repose are invaluable.

Another safeguard is in the attitude of reservation, shall we say ? which it may be well to preserve towards "Science." It is well that the enthusiasm of children should be kindled, that they should see how glorious it is to devote a lifetime to patient research, how great to find out a single secret of nature, a key to many riddles. The heroes of science should be their heroes ; the great names, especially of those who are amongst us, should be household words. But

here, again, nice discrimination should be exercised ; two points should be kept well to the front—the absolute silence of the oracle on all ultimate questions of origin and life, and the fact that, all along the line, scientific truth comes in like the tide, with steady advance, but with ebb and flow of every wavelet of truth ; so much so, that, at the present moment, the teaching of the last twenty years is discredited in at least half a dozen departments of science. Indeed, it would seem to be the part of wisdom to wait half a century before fitting the discovery of to-day into the general scheme of things. And this, not because the latest discovery is not absolutely true, but because we are not yet able so to adjust it—according to the “science of the proportion of things”—that it shall be relatively true.

But all this is surely beyond children ? By no means ; every walk should quicken their enthusiasm for the things of nature, and their reverence for the priests of that temple ; but occasion should be taken to mark the progressive advances of science, and the fact that the teaching of to-day may be the error of to-morrow, because new light may lead to new conclusions even from the facts already known. “Until quite lately, geologists thought . . . they now think . . . but they may find reason to think otherwise in the future.” To perceive that knowledge is *progressive*, and that the next “find” may always alter the bearings of what went before ; that we are waiting, and may have very long to wait, for the last word ; that science also is “revelation,” though we are not yet able fully to interpret what we know ; and that ‘science’ herself contains the promise of great impetus to the spiritual life—to perceive these things is to be able to rejoice in all truth and to wait for final certainty.

In another way we may endeavour to secure for the children that stability of mind which comes of self-knowledge. It is well that they should know so early, that they will seem to themselves always to have known, some of the laws of thought which govern their own minds. Let them know that, once an idea takes possession of them, it will pursue, so to speak, its own course, will establish its own place in the very substance of the brain, will draw its own train of ideas after it. One of the most fertile sources of youthful infidelity is the fact that thoughtful boys and girls are infinitely surprised when they come to notice the course of their own thoughts. They read a book or listen to talk with a tendency to what is to them "free-thought." And then, the "fearful joy" of finding that their own thoughts begin with the thought they have heard, and go on and on to new and startling conclusions on the same lines! The mental stir of all this gives a delightful sense of power, and a sense of inevitableness and certainty too; for they do not intend or try to think this or that. It comes of itself; their reason, they believe, is acting independently of them, and how can they help assuming that what comes to them of itself, with an air of absolute certainty, must of necessity be right?

But what if from childhood they had been warned, "Take care of your thoughts, and the rest will take care of itself; let a thought in, and it will stay; will come again to-morrow and the next day, will make a place for itself in your brain, and will bring many other thoughts like itself. Your business is to look at the thoughts as they come, to keep out the wrong thoughts, and let in the right. See that ye *enter not* into temptation." This sort of teaching is not so hard to understand as the rules for the English nominative,



and is of infinitively more profit in the conduct of life. It is a great safeguard to know that your "reason" is capable of proving any theory you allow yourself to entertain.

We have touched here only on the negative side of the parent's work as prophet, inspirer. There are perhaps few parents to whom the innocence of the babe in its mother's arms does not appeal with pathetic force. "Open me the gates of righteousness, that I may go in unto them," is the voice of the little unworldly child; and a wish, anyway, that he may be kept unspotted from the world is breathed in every kiss of his mother, in the light of his father's eyes. But how ready we are to conclude that children cannot be expected to understand spiritual things. Our own grasp of the things of the Spirit is all too lax, and how can we expect that the child's feeble intelligence can apprehend the highest mysteries of our being? But here we are altogether wrong. It is with the advance of years that a materialistic temper settles upon us. But the children live in the light of the morning-land. The spirit-world has no mysteries for them; that parable and travesty of the spirit-world, the fairy-world, where all things are possible, is it not their favourite dwelling-place? And fairy-tales are so dear to children because their spirits fret against the hard and narrow limitations of time and place and substance; they cannot breathe freely in a material world. Think what the vision of God should be to the little child already peering wistfully through the bars of his prison-house. Not a far-off God, a cold abstraction, but a warm, breathing, spiritual Presence about his path and about his bed—a Presence in which he recognises protection and tenderness in darkness and danger, towards which



he rushes as the timid child to hide his face in his mother's skirts.

A friend tells me the following story of her girlhood. It so happened that extra lessons detained her at school until dark every day during the winter. She was extremely timid, but, with the unconscious reserve of youth, never thought of mentioning her fear of "something." Her way home lay by a river-side, a solitary path under trees—big trees, with masses of shadow. The black shadows, in which "something" might lie hid—the *swsh-sh, swsh-sh* of the river, which might be whisperings or the rustle of garments—filled her night by night with unabated terror. She fled along that river-side path with beating heart; but, quick as flying steps and beating heart, these words beat in her brain, over, and over, and over, the whole length of the way, evening by evening, winter after winter: "Thou art my hiding-place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Years after, when the woman might be supposed to have outgrown girlish terrors, she found herself again walking alone in the early darkness of a winter's evening under trees by the *swsh-sh* of another river. The old terror returned, and with it the old words came to her, and kept time the whole length of the way with her hasty steps. Such a place to hide him in should be the thought of God to every child.

Their keen sensitiveness to spiritual influences is not due to ignorance on the part of the children. It is we, not they, who are in error. The whole tendency of modern biological thought is to confirm the teaching of the Bible: the ideas which quicken come from above; the mind of the little child is an open field, surely "good ground," where, morning by

morning, the sower goes forth to sow, and the seed is the Word. All our teaching of children should be given reverently, with the humble sense that we are invited in this matter to co-operate with the Holy Spirit; but it should be given dutifully and diligently, with the awful sense that our co-operation would appear to be made a condition of the Divine action; that the Saviour of the world pleads with us to "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," as if we had the power to hinder, as we know that we have.

This thought of the Saviour of the world implies another conception which we sometimes leave out of sight in dealing with children. Young faces are not always sunny and lovely; even the brightest children in the happiest circumstances have their clouded hours. We rightly put the cloud down to some little disorder, or to the weather, but these are the secondary causes which reveal a deep-seated discontent. Children have a sense of sin acute in proportion to their sensitiveness. We are in danger of trusting too much to a rose-water treatment; we do not take children seriously enough; brought face to face with a child, we find he is a very real person, but in our educational theories we take him as "something between a wax doll and an angel." He sins; he is guilty of greediness, falsehood, malice, cruelty, a hundred faults that would be hateful in a grown-up person; we say he will know better by-and-by. He will never know better; he is keenly aware of his own odiousness. How many of us would say about our childhood, if we told the whole truth, "Oh, I was an odious little thing!" and that, not because we recollect our faults, but because we recollect our childish estimate of ourselves. Many a bright and merry child is odious

in his own eyes ; and the "peace, peace, where there is no peace," of fond parents and friends is little comfort. It is well that we "ask for the old paths, where is the good way ;" it is not well that, in the name of the old paths, we lead our children into blind alleys, nor that we let them follow the new into bewildering mazes.

## CHAPTER VI

### PARENTS AS INSPIRERS

#### PART IV

“One of the little boys gazing upon the terrible desolation of the scene, so unlike in its savage and inhuman aspects anything he had ever seen at home, nestled close to his mother, and asked with bated breath, ‘Mither, is there a God here?’”—JOHN BURROUGHS.

THE last chapter introduced the thought of parents in their highest function—as revealers of God to their children. To bring the human race, family by family, child by child, out of the savage and inhuman desolation where He is not, into the light and warmth and comfort of the presence of God, is, no doubt, the chief thing we have to do in the world. And this individual work with each child, being the most momentous work in the world, is put into the hands of the wisest, most loving, disciplined, and divinely instructed of human beings. Be ye perfect *as your Father* is perfect, is the perfection of parenthood, perhaps to be attained only in its fulness through parenthood. There are mistaken parents, ignorant parents, a few indifferent parents, even, as one in a thousand, callous parents; but the good that is done upon the earth is done, under God, by parents, whether directly or indirectly.

Parents, who recognise that their great work is to be done by the instrumentality of the ideas they are able to introduce into the minds of their children,

will take anxious thought as to those ideas of God which are most fitting for children, and as to how those ideas may best be conveyed. Let us consider an idea which is just now causing some stir in people's thoughts.

"We read some of the Old Testament history as 'history of the Jews,' and Job and Isaiah and the Psalms as poetry—and I am glad to say he is very fond of them; and parts of the Gospels in Greek, as the life and character of a hero. It is the greatest mistake to impose them upon children as authoritative and divine all at once. It at once diminishes their interest: we ought to work slowly up through the human side."\*

Here is a theory which commends itself to many persons because it is "so reasonable." But it goes upon the assumption that we are ruled by Reason, an infallible entity, which is certain, give it fair play, to bring us to just conclusions. Now the exercise of that function of the mind which we call reasoning—we must decline to speak of "the Reason"—does indeed bring us to inevitable conclusions; the process is definite, the result convincing; but whether that result be right or wrong depends altogether upon the initial idea which, when we wish to discredit it, we call a prejudice; when we wish to exalt, we call an intuition, even an inspiration. It would be idle to illustrate this position; the whole history of Error is the history of the logical outcome of what we happily call misconceptions. The history of Persecution is the tale of how the inevitable conclusions arrived at by reasoning pass themselves off for truth. The Event of Calvary was due to no hasty mad outburst of popular feeling. It was a triumph of reasoning: the

\* "Memoirs of Arthur Hamilton." Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co.



inevitable issue of more than one logical sequence ; the Crucifixion was not criminal, but altogether laudable, *if* that is right which is reasonable. And this is why the hearts of religious Jews were hardened and their understanding darkened ; they were truly doing what was *right* in their own eyes. It is a marvellous thing to perceive the thoughts within us driving us forward to an inevitable conclusion, even against our will. How can that conclusion which presents itself to us in spite of ourselves fail to be right ?

Let us place ourselves for one instant in the position of the logical and conscientious Jew. “‘Jehovah’ is a name of awe, unapproachable in thought or act except in ways Himself has specified. To attempt unlawful approach is to blaspheme. As Jehovah is infinitely great, presumptuous offence is infinitely heinous, is criminal, is the last crime as committed against Him who is the First. The blasphemer is worthy of death. This man makes himself equal with God, the unapproachable. He is a blasphemer, arrogant as Beelzebub. He is doubly worthy of death. To the people of the Jews is committed in trust the honoured Name ; upon them it is incumbent to exterminate the blasphemer. The man must die.” Here is the secret of the virulent hatred which dogged the steps of the blameless Life. These men were following the dictates of reason, and *knew*, so they would say, that they were doing right. Here we have the invincible ignorance which the Light of the world failed to illumine ; and He,

“ Who knows us as we are,  
Yet loves us better than He knows,”

offers for them the true plea, “They know not what they do.” The steps of the argument are incontro-

vertible ; the error lies in the initial idea,—such conception of Jehovah as made the conception of Christ inadmissible, impossible. Thus reasoned the Jew upon whom his religion had the first claim. The patriotic Jew, to whom religion itself was subservient to the hopes of his nation, arrived by quite another chain of *spontaneous* arguments at the same inevitable conclusion :—“The Jews are the chosen people. The first duty of a Jew is towards his nation. These are critical times. A great hope is before us, but we are in the grip of the Romans ; they may crush out the national life before our hope is realised. Nothing must be done to alarm their suspicions. This Man ? By all accounts He is harmless, perhaps righteous. But He stirs up the people. It is rumoured that they call Him King of the Jews. He must not be permitted to ruin the hopes of the nation. He must die. It is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” Thus the consummate crime that has been done upon the earth was done probably without any consciousness of criminality ; on the contrary, with the acquittal of that spurious moral sense which supports with its approval all *reasonable* action. The Crucifixion was the logical and necessary outcome of ideas imbibed from their cradles by the persecuting Jews. So of every persecution ; none is born of the occasion and the hour, but comes out of the habit of thought of a lifetime.

It is the primal impulse to these habits of thought which children must owe to their parents ; and, as a man's thought and action Godward is—

“The very pulse of the machine,”

the introduction of such primal ideas as shall impel

the soul to God is the first duty and the highest privilege of parents. Whatever sin of unbelief a man is guilty of, are his parents wholly without blame? Let us consider what is commonly done in the nursery in this respect. No sooner can the little being lisp than he is taught to kneel up in his mother's lap, and say "God bless . . ." and then follows a list of the near and dear, and "God bless . . . and make him a good boy, for Jesus' sake. Amen." It is very touching and beautiful. I once peeped in at an open cottage door in a moorland village, and saw a little child in its nightgown kneeling in its mother's lap and saying its evening prayer. The spot has ever since remained to me a sort of shrine. There is no sight more touching and tender. By-and-by, so soon as he can speak the words,

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,"

is added to the little one's prayer, and later, "Our Father." Nothing could be more suitable and more beautiful than these morning and evening approaches to God, the little children brought to Him by their mothers. And most of us can "think back" to the hallowing influence of these early prayers. But might not more be done? How many times a day does a mother lift up her heart to God as she goes in and out amongst her children, and they never know! "To-day I talked to them" (a boy and girl of four and five) "about Rebekah at the well. They were very much interested, especially about Eliezer praying in his heart and the answer coming at once. They said, 'How did he pray?' I said, 'I often pray in my heart when you know nothing about it. Sometimes you begin to show a naughty spirit, and I pray for you in my heart, and almost directly I find the good Spirit comes, and your

faces show my prayer is answered.' O. stroked my hand and said, 'Dear mother, I shall think of that!' Boy looked thoughtful, but didn't speak; but when they were in bed I knelt down to pray for them before leaving them, and when I got up, Boy said, 'Mother, God filled my heart with goodness while you prayed for us; and, mother, I *will* try to-morrow.'" Is it possible that the mother could, when alone with her children, occasionally hold this communing out loud, so that the children might grow up in the sense of the presence of God? It would probably be difficult for many mothers to break down the barrier of spiritual reserve in the presence of even their own children. But could it be done, would it not lead to glad and natural living in the recognised presence of God?

A mother who remembered a little penny scent-bottle as an early joy of her own, took three such small bottles home to her three little girls. They got them next morning at the family breakfast and enjoyed them all through the meal. Before it ended the mother was called away, and little M. was sitting rather solitary with her scent-bottle and the remains of her breakfast. And out of the pure well of the little girl's heart came this, intended for nobody's ear, "Dear mother, you are *too* good!" Think of the joy of the mother who should overhear her little child murmuring over the first primrose of the year, "Dear God, you are *too* good!" Children are so imitative, that if they hear their parents speak out continually their joys and fears, their thanks and wishes, they too will have many things to say.

Another point in this connection: the little German child hears and speaks many times a day of *der liebe Gott*; to be sure he addresses Him as "*Du*," but *du* is

part of his everyday speech ; the circle of the very dear and intimate is hedged in by the magic *du*. So with the little French child, whose thought and word are ever of *le bon Dieu* ; he also says *Tu*, but that is how he speaks to those most endeared to him. But the little English child is thrust out in the cold by an archaic mode of address, reverent in the ears of us older people, but forbidding, we may be sure, to the child. Then, for the Lord's Prayer, what a boon would be a truly reverent translation of it into the English of to-day. To us, who have learned to spell it out, the present form is dear, almost sacred ; but we must not forget that it is after all only a translation ; and is, perhaps, the most archaic piece of English in modern use : "which art,"\* commonly rendered "chart," means nothing for a child. "Hallowed" is the speech of a strange tongue to him—not much more to us ; "trespasses" is a semi-legal term, never likely to come into his everyday talk, and no explanations will make "Thy" have the same force for him as "your." To make a child utter his prayers in a strange speech is to put up a barrier between him and his "Almighty Lover." Again, might we not venture to teach our children to say "dear God" ? A parent, surely, can believe that no austere reverential style can be so sweet in the Divine Father's ears as the appeal to "dear God" for sympathy in joy and help in trouble, which flows naturally from the little child who is "used to God." Let children grow up aware of the constant, immediate, joy-giving, joy-taking Presence in the midst of them, and you may laugh at all assaults of "infidelity," which is foolishness to him who knows his God as—only far better than—he knows father or mother, wife or child.

\* Catholics say "who art."



Let them grow up, too, with the shout of a King in their midst. There are, in this poor stuff we call human nature, founts of loyalty, worship, passionate devotion, glad service, which have, alas! to be unsealed in the earth-laden older heart, but only ask place to flow from the child's. There is no safeguard and no joy like that of being under orders, being possessed, controlled, continually in the service of One whom it is gladness to obey.

We lose sight of the fact in our modern civilisation, but a king, a leader, implies warfare, a foe, victory—possible defeat and disgrace. And this is the conception of life which cannot too soon be brought before children.

“After thinking the matter over with some care, I resolved that I cannot do better than give you my view of what it was that the average boy carried away from our Rugby of half-a-century ago which stood him in the best stead—was of the highest value to him—in after life. . . . I have been in some doubt as to what to put first, and am by no means sure that the few who are left of my old schoolfellows would agree with me; but, speaking for myself, I think this was our most marked characteristic, the feeling that in school and close we were in training for a big fight—were, in fact, already engaged in it—a fight which would last all our lives, and try all our powers, physical, intellectual, and moral, to the utmost. I need not say that this fight was the world-old one of good with evil, of light and truth against darkness and sin, of Christ against the devil.”

So said the author of “Tom Brown” in an address to Rugby School delivered on a recent Quinquagesima Sunday. This is plain speaking; education is only worthy of the name as it teaches this lesson; and it is

a lesson which should be learnt in the home or ever the child sets foot in any other school of life. It is an insult to children to say they are too young to understand this for which we are sent into the world. A boy of five, a great-grandson of Dr. Arnold, was sitting at the piano with his mother, choosing his Sunday hymn ; he chose "Thy will be done," and, as his special favourite, the verse beginning, "Renew my will from day to day." The choice of hymn and verse rather puzzled his mother, who had a further glimpse into the world of child-thought when the little fellow said wistfully, "Oh, dear, it's very hard to do God's work!" The difference between doing and bearing was not plain to him, but the battle and struggle and strain of life already pressed on the spirit of the "careless, happy child." That an evil spiritual personality can get at their thoughts, and incite them to "be naughty," children learn all too soon, and understand, perhaps, better than we do. Then, they are cross, "naughty," separate, sinful, needing to be healed as truly as the hoary sinner, and much more aware of their need, because the tender soul of the child, like an infant's skin, is fretted by spiritual soreness. "It's very kind of God to forgive me so often ; I've been naughty so many times to-day," said a sad little sinner of six, not at all because any one else had been at the pains to convince her of naughtiness. Even "Pet Marjorie's" buoyancy is not proof against this sad sense of shortcoming :—

"Yesterday I behaved extremely ill in God's most holy church, for I would never attend myself nor let Isabella attend, . . . and it was the very same *Devil* that tempted Job that tempted me, I am sure ; but he resisted Satan, though he had boils and many other misfortunes which I have escaped."—(At six !)

We must needs smile at the little "crimes," but we must not smile too much, and let children be depressed with much "naughtiness" when they should live in the instant healing, in the dear Name, of the Saviour of the world.

## CHAPTER VII

### *THE PARENT AS SCHOOLMASTER*

"THE schoolmaster will make him sit up!" "Sit up," that is, "come when he's called," apparently, for the remark concerned a young person who went on spinning his top with nonchalance, ignoring an intermittent stream of objurgations from his mother, whose view was that bedtime had arrived. Circumstances alter cases, but is it unheard of in higher ranks of life to trust to the schoolmaster to make a child "sit up," after a good deal of mental and moral sprawling about at home?

"Oh, he's a little fellow yet; he will know better by-and-by."

"My view is, let children have a delightful childhood. Time enough for restraint and contradiction when they go to school."

"We do not hold with punishing children; love your children, and let them alone, is our principle."

"They will meet with hardness enough in the world. Childhood shall have no harsh memories for them."

"School will break them in. Let them grow like young colts till the time comes to break them. All young things should be free to kick about."

"What's bred in the bone must come out in the flesh. I do not care much for all this clipping and shaping of children. Destroys individuality."

“When he’s older, he will know better. Time cures many faults.”

And so on ; we might fill pages with the wise things people say, who, for one excellent reason or another, prefer to leave it to the schoolmaster to make a child “sit up.” And does the schoolmaster live up to his reputation ? how far does he succeed with the child who comes to him with no self-management ? His real and proud successes are with the children who have been trained to “sit up” at home. His pleasure in such children is unbounded ; the pains he takes with them unlimited ; the successful careers he is able to launch them upon exceed the ambition of those most wildly ambitious of human beings (dare we say it ?)—parents, quiet, sensible, matter-of-fact parents. But the schoolmaster takes little credit to himself for these happy results. Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses are modest people, though they are not always credited with their virtues.

“You can do anything with So-and-so; his parents have turned him out so well.” Observe, the master takes little credit to himself (by no means so much as he deserves); and why? Experience makes fools wise; and what then of those who add experience to wisdom? “People send us their cubs to lick into shape, and what can we do?” Now the answer to this query concerns parents rather closely: what and how much can the schoolmaster do to make the boy “sit up” who has not been to the manner bred?

No suasion will make you “sit up” if you are an oyster; no, nor even if you are a cod. You must have a backbone, and your backbone must have learned its work before sitting up is possible to you. No doubt the human oyster may grow a backbone, and the human cod may get into the way of sitting



up, and some day, perhaps, we shall know of the heroic endeavours made by schoolmaster and mistress to prop up, and haul up, and draw up, and anyhow keep alert and sitting up, creatures whose way it is to sprawl. Sometimes the result is surprising; they sit up in a row with the rest and look all right; even when the props are removed they keep to the trick of sitting up for awhile. The schoolmaster begins to rub his hands, and the parents say, "I told you so. Didn't I always say Jack would come right in the end?" Wait a bit. The end is not yet. The habits of school, as of military life, are more or less mechanical. The early habits are vital; reversion to these takes place, and Jack sprawls as a man just as he sprawled as a child, only more so. Various social props keep him up; he has the wit to seem to "sit up"; he is lovable and his life is respectable; and no one suspects that this easy-going Mr. John Brown is a failure; a man who had the elements of greatness in him, and might have been of use in the world had he been put under discipline from his infancy.

Sprawling is an ugly word, but the attitude we are thinking of is by no means always inelegant. Scott gives a delightful illustration of one kind of mental sprawling in "Waverley":—

"Edward Waverley's powers of apprehension were so quick as almost to resemble intuition, and the chief care of his preceptor was to prevent him, as a sportsman would phrase it, from overrunning his game; that is, from acquiring his knowledge in a slight, flimsy, and inadequate manner. And here the instructor had to combat another propensity too often united with brilliancy of fancy and vivacity of talent—the indolence, namely, which can only be stirred by

some strong motive of gratification, and which renounces study as soon as curiosity is gratified, the pleasure of conquering the first difficulties exhausted, and the novelty of pursuit at an end." And the story goes on to show, without laborious pointing of the moral, how *Waverley* by name was *wavering* by nature, was ever the sport of circumstances because he had not learned in youth to direct his course. He blunders into many (most interesting) misadventures because he had failed to get, through his studies, the alertness of mind and the self-restraint which should make a man of him. Many pleasant things befall him, but not one of them, unless we except Rose Bradwardine's love—and when did woman study justice in the bestowal of her favours?—not one did he earn by his own wit or prowess; each advantage and success which came to him was the earnings of another man. The elder Waverley had not only fortune but force of character to make friends, so we are not made sad for the amiable young man for whom we must needs feel affection; he does nothing to carve out a way for himself, and he does everything to his own hindrance out of pure want of the power of self-direction, but his uncle has fortune and friends, and all ends well. For the sake, no doubt, of young persons less happily situated, and of parents who are not able to play the part of bountiful Providence to sons and daughters whom they have failed to fit for the conduct of their own lives, the great novelist takes care to point out that Edward Waverley's personal failure in life was the fault of his education. His abilities were even brilliant, but "I ought" had waited upon "I like" from his earliest days, and he had never learned to make himself do the thing he would.

Now it is this sort of "bringing under" that parents

are apt to leave to the schoolmaster. They do not give their children the discipline which results in self-compelling power, and by-and-by, when they make over the task to another, the time for training in the art of self-mastery has gone by, and a fine character is spoiled through indolence and wilfulness.

But why will it not do to leave it to the schoolmaster to make a child "sit up"? It is natural for a child to be left free as a bird in matters of no moral significance. We would not let him tell lies, but if he hate his lessons, that may be Nature's way of showing he had better let them alone.

We must face the facts. We are not meant to grow up in a state of nature. There is something simple, conclusive, even idyllic, in the statement that so-and-so is "natural." What more would you have? Jean Jacques Rousseau preached the doctrine of natural education, and no reformer has had a greater following. "It's human nature," we say, when stormy Harry snatches his drum from Jack; when baby Marjorie, who is not two, screams for Susie's doll. So it is, and for that very reason it must be dealt with early. Even Marjorie must be taught better. "I always finish teaching my children obedience before they are one year old," said a wise mother; and any who know the nature of children, and the possibilities open to the educator, will say, Why not? Obedience in the first year, and all the virtues of the good life as the years go on; every year with its own definite work to show in the training of character. Is Edward a selfish child when his fifth birthday comes? The fact is noted in his parents' year-book, with the resolve that by his sixth birthday he shall, please God, be a generous child. Here, the reader who has not realised that to exercise discipline is one of the chief functions of

parenthood, smiles and talks about "human nature" with all the air of an unanswerable argument.

But we live in a redeemed world, and one of the meanings which that unfathomable phrase bears is, that it is the duty of those who have the care of childhood to eradicate each vulgar and hateful trait, to plant and foster the precious fruits of that kingdom in the children who have been delivered from the kingdom of nature into the kingdom of grace; that is to say, all children born into this redeemed world. The parent who believes that the possibilities of virtuous training are unlimited will set to work with cheerful confidence, will forego the twaddle about "Nature," whether as lovely in itself or as an irresistible force, and will perceive that the first function of the parent is that function of *discipline* which is so cheerfully made over to the schoolmaster.

Now, to begin with, discipline does not mean a birch-rod, nor a corner, nor a slipper, nor bed, nor any such last resort of the feeble. The sooner we cease to believe in merely penal suffering as part of the Divine plan, the sooner will a spasmodic resort to the birch-rod die out in families. We do not say the rod is never useful; we do say it should never be necessary. The fact is, many of us do not believe in education, except as it means the acquirement of a certain amount of knowledge; but education which shall deal curatively and methodically with every flaw in character does not enter into our scheme of things possible. Now, no less than this is what we mean when we say, Education is a Discipline. Where parents fail, the poor soul has one further chance in the discipline of life; but we must remember that, while it is the nature of the child to submit to discipline, it is the nature of the undisciplined man to



run his head in passionate wilfulness against the circumstances that are for his training; so that the parent who wilfully chooses to leave his child to be "broken in" by the schoolmaster or by life leaves him to a fight in which all the odds are against him. The physique, the temper, the disposition, the career, the affections, the aspirations of a man are all, more or less, the outcome of the discipline his parents have brought him under, or of the lawlessness they have allowed. What is discipline? Look at the word; there is no hint of punishment in it. A disciple is a follower, and discipline is the state of the follower, the learner, imitator. Mothers and fathers do not well to forget that their children are, by the very order of Nature, their disciples. Now no man sets himself up for a following of disciples who does not wish to indoctrinate these with certain principles, maxims, rules of life. So should the parent have at heart notions of life and duty which he labours without pause to instil into his children.

He who would draw disciples does not trust to force, but to these three things—to the attraction of his doctrine, to the persuasion of his presentation, to the enthusiasm of his disciples; so the parent has teachings of the perfect life which he knows how to present continually with winning force until the children are quickened with such zeal for virtue and holiness as carries them forward with leaps and bounds. Again, the teacher does not indoctrinate his pupils all at once, but here a little and there a little, steady progress on a careful plan; so the parent who would have his child a partaker of the Divine nature has a scheme, an ascending scale of virtues, in which he is diligent to practise his young disciple. He adds to the faith with which the child is so richly



dowered virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control. Having practised his child in self-control, he trains him in patience, and to patience he adds godliness, and to godliness, kindness, and to kindness, love. These, and such as these, wise parents cultivate as systematically and with as definite results as if they were teaching the "three R's."

But how? The answer covers so wide a field that we must leave it for another chapter. Only this here—every quality has its defect, every defect has its quality. Examine your child; he has qualities, he is generous; see to it that the lovable little fellow, who would give away his soul, is not also rash, impetuous, self-willed, passionate, "nobody's enemy but his own." It rests with parents to make low the high places and exalt the valleys, to make straight paths for the feet of their little son.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CULTURE OF CHARACTER

#### PART I

“WHAT get I from my father?  
Lusty life and vigorous will;  
What from my gentle mother?  
Cheerful days and poet's skill,”\*

says Goethe; for poets, like the rest of us, are born, not made, and get the most of what they are from their parents. But it did not take poet or modern scientist to discover this; people have known it time out of mind. Like father, like child, they said, and were satisfied; for it was not the way in earlier days to thresh out the great facts of life. Not so now; we talk about it and about it; call it *heredity*, and take it into count in our notions, at anyrate, if not in our practice. Nobody writes a biography now without attempting to produce progenitors and early surroundings that shall account for his man or his woman. This fact of heredity is very much before the public, and by-and-by will have its bearing on the loose notions people hold about education. In this sort of way—“Harold is a bright little boy, but he hasn't the least power of attention.”

\* “Vom Vater hab' ich die Statur,  
Des Lebens ernstes Führen;  
Vom Mütterchen die Frohnatur,  
Und Lust zu fabuliren.”

“Oh, I know he hasn't; but then, poor child, he can't help it! 'What's bred in the bone,' you know; and we are feather-brained on both sides of the house.”

Now the practical educational question of our day is just this, Can he help it? or, Can his parents help it? or, Must the child sit down for life with whatever twist he has inherited? The fact is, many of us, professional teachers, have been taking aim rather beside the mark; we talk as if the development of certain faculties were the chief object of education; and we point to our results, intellectual, moral, æsthetic, physical, with a—“See there, what culture can effect!” But we forget that the child has inborn cravings after all we have given him. Just as the healthy child must have his dinner and his bed, so too does he crave for knowledge, perfection, beauty, power, society; and all he wants is opportunity. Give him opportunities of loving and learning, and he will love and learn, for “'tis his nature to.” Whoever has taken note of the sweet reasonableness, the quick intelligence, the bright imaginings of a child, will think the fuss we make about the right studies for developing these is like asking, How shall we get a hungry man to eat his dinner?

Many a man got his turn for natural science because, as a boy, he lived in the country, and had a chance to observe living things and their ways. Nobody took pains to develop his faculty; all he had was opportunity. If the boy's mind is crammed with other matters, he has no opportunity, and you may meet men of culture who have lived most of their lives in the country, and don't know a thrush from a blackbird. I know of a woman who has developed both a metaphysical and a literary turn, because, as

a girl of ten, she was allowed to browse on old volumes of the *Spectator*, the most telling part of her education, she thinks. Again, I watched quite lately an extraordinary educational result of opportunity. A friend, interested in a Working Boys' Club, undertook to teach a class to model in clay. There was no selection made; the boys were mill-boys, taken as they came in, with no qualifications, except that, as their teacher said, they had not been spoilt—that is, they had not been taught to draw in the ordinary way. She gave them clay, a model, one or two modelling tools, and also, being an artist, the *feeling* of the object to be copied. After half-a-dozen lessons, the things they produced cannot be called less than works of art; and delightful it was to see the vigour and spirit they worked with, the artistic instinct which caught the sentiment of the object, as the creases made by a little foot which make a child's shoe a thing to kiss. This lady maintains that she only *let out* what was in the boys; but she did more, her own art enthusiasm forced out artistic effort. Even taking into account the enthusiasm of the teacher—I wish we might always count on that factor—this remains a fair case to prove our point, which is, give them opportunity and direction, and children will do the greater part of their own education, intellectual, æsthetic, even moral, by reason of the wonderfully balanced desires, powers, and affections which go to make up human nature.

A cheerful doctrine this, which should help to swell the ranks of the unemployed. Outlets for their energies, a little direction, a little control, and then we may sit by with folded hands and see them do it. But, in fact, there are two things to be done: "powers to be developed—where a little of our help goes a

long way; and character to be formed—and here children are as clay in the hands of the potter, absolutely dependent on their parents. Disposition, intellect, genius, come pretty much by nature; but character is an achievement, the one practical achievement possible to us for ourselves and for our children; and all real advance in family or individual is along the lines of character. Our great people are great simply by reason of their force of character. For this, more than for their literary successes, Carlyle and Johnson are great. Boswell's "Life" is, and perhaps deserves to be, more of a literary success than anything of his master's; but what figure does he make after all?

Greatness and littleness belong to character, and life would be dull were we all cast in one mould; but how come we to differ? Surely by reason of our inherited qualities. It is hereditary tendencies which result in character. The man who is generous, obstinate, hot-tempered, devout, is so, on the whole, because that strain of character runs in his family. Some progenitor got a bent from his circumstances towards fault or virtue, and that bent will go on repeating itself to the end of the chapter. To save that single quality from the exaggeration which would destroy the balance of qualities we call sanity, two counter-forces are provided: marriage into alien families, and *education*.

We come round now to the point we started from. If the development of character rather than of faculty is the main work of education, and if people are born, so to speak, ready-made, with all the elements of their after-character in them, certain to be developed by time and circumstances, what is left for education to do?



Very commonly, the vote is, do nothing; though there are three or four ways of arriving at that conclusion.

As, What's the good? The fathers have eaten sour grapes; the children's teeth *must* be set on edge. Tommy is obstinate as a little mule—but what would you have? So is his father. So have been all the Joneses, time out of mind; and Tommy's obstinacy is taken as a fact, not to be helped nor hindered.

Or, Mary is a butterfly of a child, never constant for five minutes to anything she has in hand. "That child is just like me!" says her mother; "but time will steady her." Fanny, again, sings herself to sleep with the Sicilian Vesper Hymn (her nurse's lullaby) before she is able to speak. "It's strange how an ear for music runs in our family!" is the comment, but no particular pains are taken to develop the talent.

Another child asks odd questions, is inclined to make little jokes about sacred things, to call his father "Tom," and, generally, to show a want of reverence. His parents are earnest-minded people—think with pain of the loose opinions of Uncle Harry, and decide on a policy of repression. "Do as you're bid, and make no remarks," becomes the child's rule of life, until he finds outlets little suspected at home.

In another case, common thought is much more on a level with the science of the day; there is a tendency to lung-trouble: the doctors undertake to deal with the tendency so long as the *habit* of delicacy is not set up. The necessary precautions are taken, and there is no reason why the child should not die at a good old age.

Once more;—there are parents who are aware of the advance science has made in education, but doubt the lawfulness of looking to science for aid in the

making of character. They see hereditary defects in their children, but set them down as of "the natural fault and corruption of the nature of every man which naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam." This, they believe, it is not their part to remedy; that is, unless the boy's fault be of a disturbing kind—a violent temper, for example—when the mother thinks no harm to whip the offending Adam out of him. But so surely as we believe the laws of the spiritual life to have been revealed to us, so, not less surely, though without the same sanctity, have been revealed the laws by which body, mind, and moral nature flourish or decay. These it behoves us to make ourselves acquainted with; and the Christian parent who is shy of science, and prefers to bring up his children by the light of Nature when that of authoritative revelation fails, does so to his children's irreparable loss.

If the race is advancing, it is along the lines of character, for each new generation inherits and adds to the best that has gone before it. We should have to-day the very flower and fruit that has been a-preparing through long lines of progenitors. Children have always been lovely, so far back as that day when a little child in the streets of Jerusalem was picked up and set in the midst to show of what sort are the princes in the Kingdom to come:—

"In the Kingdom are the children—  
You may read it in their eyes;  
All the freedom of the Kingdom  
In their careless humour lies."

And what mother has not bowed before the princely heart of innocence in her own little child? But apart from this, of their glad living in the sunshine of the Divine Countenance, surely our children are "more

so" than those of earlier days. Never before was a "Jackanapes" written, or the "Story of a Short Life." Shakespeare never made a child, nor Scott, hardly Dickens, often as he tried; either we are waking up to what is in them, or the children are indeed advancing in the van of the times, holding in light grasp the gains of the past, the possibilities of the future. It is the age of child-worship; and very lovely are the well-brought-up children of Christian and cultured parents. But, alas! how many of us degrade the thing we love! Think of the multitude of the innocents to be launched on the world, already mutilated, spiritually and morally, at the hands of doting parents.

The duteous father and mother, on the contrary, who discern any lovely family trait in one of their children, set themselves to nourish and cherish it as a gardener the peaches he means to show. We know how "that kiss made me a painter," that is, warmed into life whatever art faculty the child had. The choicer the plant, the gardener tells us, the greater the pains must he take with the rearing of it: and here is the secret of the loss and waste of some of the most beautiful and lovable natures the world has seen; they have not had the pains taken with their rearing that their delicate, sensitive organisations demanded. Think how Shelley was left to himself! We live in embarrassing days. It is well to cry, "Give us light—more light and fuller;" but what if the new light discover to us a maze of obligations, intricate and tedious?

It is, at first sight, bewildering to perceive that for whatever distinctive quality, moral or intellectual, we discern in the children, special culture is demanded; but, after all, our obligation towards each such quality

resolves itself into providing for it these four things : nourishment, exercise, change, and rest.

A child has a great turn for languages (his grandfather was the master of nine) ; the little fellow "lrips in Latin," learns his "*mensa*" from his nurse, knows his declensions before he is five. What line is open to the mother who sees such an endowment in her child ? First, let him use it ; let him learn his declensions, and whatever else he takes to without the least sign of effort. Probably the Latin case-endings come as easily and pleasantly to his ear as does "See-saw, Margery Daw," to the ordinary child, though no doubt "Margery Daw" is the wholesomer kind of thing. Let him do just so much as he takes to of his own accord ; but never urge, never applaud, never show him off. Next, let words convey ideas as he is able to bear them. Buttercup, primrose, dandelion, magpie, each tells its own tale ; daisy is day's-eye, opening with the sun, and closing when he sets—

"That well by reason it men callen may  
The daisie, or else the eye of day."

Let him feel that the common words we use without a thought are beautiful, full of story and interest. It is a great thing that the child should get the *ideas* proper to the qualities inherent in him. An idea fitly put is taken in without effort, and, once in, ideas behave like living creatures—they feed, grow, and multiply. Next, provide him with some one delightful change of thought, that is, with work and ideas altogether apart from his bent for languages. Let him know, with friendly intimacy, every out-of-door object that comes in his way—the red-start, the rose-chaffer, the ways of the caddis-worm, forest trees, field flowers—all natural objects, common and curious, near his



home. No other knowledge is so delightful; not natural science, but common acquaintance with natural objects.

Or, again, some one remarks that all our great inventors have in their youth handled material—clay, wood, iron, brass, pigments. Let him work in material. To provide a child with delightful resources on lines opposed to his natural bent is the one way of keeping a quite sane mind in the presence of an absorbing pursuit.

At the same time, change of occupation is not rest: if a man ply a machine, now with his foot, and now with his hand, the foot or the hand rests, but the man does not. A game of romps (better, so far as mere rest goes, than games with laws and competitions), nonsense talk, a fairy tale, or to lie on his back in the sunshine, should rest the child, and of such as these he should have his fill.

This, speaking broadly, is the *rationale* of the matter:—just as actually as we sew or write through the instrumentality of the hand, so the child learns, thinks, feels, by means of a material organ—the very delicate nervous tissue of the cerebrum. Now this tissue is constantly and rapidly wearing away. The more it is used, whether in the way of mental effort or emotional excitement, the more it wears away. Happily, rapid new growth replaces the waste, wherefore, work and consequent waste of tissue are necessary. But let the waste get ahead of the gain, and lasting mischief happens. Therefore never let the child's brain-work exceed his chances of reparation, whether such work come in the way of too hard lessons, or of the excitement attending childish dissipations. Another plea for abundant rest:—one thing at a time, and that done well, appears to be Nature's rule; and his hours of



rest and play are the hours of the child's physical growth—witness the stunted appearance of children who are allowed to live in a whirl of small excitements.

A word more as to the necessity of *change of thought* for the child who has a distinct bent. The brain tissue not only wastes with work, but, so to speak, wastes locally. We all know how done up we are after giving our minds for a few hours or days to any one subject, whether anxious or joyous: we are glad at last to escape from the engrossing thought, and find it a weariness when it returns upon us. It would appear that, set up the continuous working of certain ideas, and a certain tract of the brain substance is, as it were, worn out and weakened with the constant traffic in these ideas. And this is of more consequence when the ideas are moral than when they are merely intellectual. Hamlet's thoughts play continuously round a few distressing facts; he becomes morbid, not entirely sane; in a word, he is *eccentric*. Now, possibly, eccentricity is a danger against which the parents of well-descended children must be on the watch. These are born with strong tendencies to certain qualities and ways of thinking. Their bringing up tends to accentuate their qualities; the balance between these and other qualities is lost, and they become eccentric persons. Mr. Matthew Arnold writes down the life and the work of a great poet as *ineffectual*; and this is, often enough, the verdict passed upon the eccentric. Whatever force of genius and of character, whatever lovely moral traits they may have, the world will not take them as guides for good, unless they do as others do in things lawful and expedient; and truly there is a broad margin for originality in declining to hunt with the hounds in things neither lawful nor expedient.

Now, practically, what is the mother's course who notices in her most promising child little traits of oddity? He does not care much for games, does not get on well with the rest, has some little den of his own where he ruminates. Poor little fellow! he wants a confidante badly; most likely he has tried nurse and brothers and sisters, to no purpose. If this go on, he will grow up with the idea that nobody wants him, nobody understands him, will take his slice of life and eat it (with a snarl) all by himself. But if his mother have tact enough to get at him, she will preserve for the world one of its saving characters. Depend upon it there is something at work in the child—genius, humanity, poetry, ambition, pride of family. It is that he wants outlet and exercise for an inherited trait almost too big for his childish soul. Rosa Bonheur was observed to be a restless child whose little shoes of life were a misfit: lessons did not please her, and play did not please her; and her *artist* father hit on the notion of soothing the child's divine discontent by—apprenticing her to a needle-woman! Happily she broke her bonds, and we have her pictures. In the case of pride of birth, it is well that the child should be brought face to face and heart to heart with the "great humility" of our Pattern. But that being done, this sense of family distinction is a wonderful lever to raise the little world of the child's nature. *Noblesse oblige*. He must needs add honour and not dishonour to a distinguished family. I know of a little boy who bears two distinguished family names—Browning-Newton, let us say. He goes to a preparatory school, where it is the custom to put the names of defaulters on the blackboard. By-and-by, his little brother went to school too, and the bigger boy's exordium was:—"We'll *never*

let two such names as ours be stuck up on the blackboard !”

Amongst the immediate causes of eccentricity is the dreariness of daily living, the sense of which falls upon us all at times, and often with deadly weight upon the more finely strung and highly gifted. “Oh, dear ! I wish I was in Jupiter !” sighed a small urchin who had already used up this planet. It rests with the parents to see that the dreariness of a motiveless life does not settle, sooner or later, on any one of their children. We are made with a yearning for the “fearful joy” of passion ; and if this do not come to us in lawful ways, we look for it in eccentric, or worse, in illegitimate courses. The mother, to whom her child is as an open book, must find a vent for the restless working of his nature—the more apt to be troubled by—

“The burden of the mystery,  
The heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world”—

the more finely he is himself organised. Fill him with the enthusiasm of humanity. Whatever gifts he has, let them be cultivated as “gifts for men.” “The thing best worth living for is *to be of use*,” was well said lately by a thinker who has left us. The child into whose notion of life that idea is fitted will not grow up to find time heavy on his hands. The life blessed with an enthusiasm will not be dull ; but a weight must go into the opposite scale to balance even the noblest enthusiasm. As we have said, open for him some door of natural science, some way of mechanical skill ; in a word, give the child an absorbing pursuit and a fascinating hobby, and you need not fear eccentric or unworthy developments.

It seems well to dwell at length on this subject of eccentricity, because the world loses a great deal by its splendid failures, the beautiful human beings who through one sort of eccentricity or another become ineffectual for the raising of the rest of us.

## CHAPTER IX

### *THE CULTURE OF CHARACTER*

#### PART II

SUPPOSE the parent see that the formation of character is the ultimate object of education ; see, too, that character is, in the rough, the inherited tendencies of the child, modified by his surroundings, but that character may be debased or ennobled by education ; that it is the parents' part to distinguish the first faint budding of family traits—to greet every fine trait as the highest sort of family possession to be nourished and tended with care ; to keep up at the same time the balance of qualities by bringing forward that which is of little account—the more so when they must deliver their child from eccentricity, pitfall to the original and forceful nature ;—suppose they have taken all this into the *rôle* of their duties, there yet remains much for parents to do.

We are open to what the French call the defects of our qualities ; and as ill weeds grow apace, the defects of a fine character may well choke out the graces. A little maiden loves with the passion and devotion of a woman, but she is exacting of return, and jealous of intrusion, even with her mother. A boy is ambitious ; he will be leader in the nursery, and his lead is wholesome for the rest ; but there is the pugnacious little brother who will not “follow



my leader," and the two can hardly live in the same rooms. The able boy is a tyrant when his will is crossed. There is the timid, affectionate little maid who will even tell a fib to shield her sister; and there is the high-spirited girl who never lies, but who does, now and then, bully; and so on, without end. What is the parents' part here? To magnify the quality; make the child feel that he or she has a virtue to guard—a *family* possession, and, at the same time, a gift from above. A little simple reasonable teaching may help. But let us beware of much talk. "Have you *quite* finished, mother?" said a bright little girl of five in the most polite way in the world. She had listened long to her mother's sermonising, and had many things on hand. A wise word here and there may be of use, but much more may be done by carefully hindering each "defect of its quality" from coming into play. Give the ill weeds no room to grow. Then, again, the defect may often be reclaimed and turned back to feed the quality itself. The ambitious boy's love of power may be worked into a desire to win by love his restive little brother. The passion of the loving girl may be made to include all whom her mother loves.

There is another aspect of the subject of heredity and the duties it entails. As the child of long lineage may well inherit much of what was best in his ancestors—fine physique, clear intellect, high moral worth—so also he has his risks. As some one puts it, not all the women have been brave, nor all the men chaste. We know how the tendency to certain forms of disease runs in families. Temper and temperament, moral and physical nature alike, may come down with a taint. An unhappy child may, by some odd freak of nature, appear to have left out the good

and taken into him only the unworthy. What can the parents do in such a case? They may not *reform* him—perhaps that is beyond human skill and care, once he has become all that is possible to his nature—but *transform* him, so that the being he was calculated to become never develops at all; but another being comes to light blest with every grace of which he had only the defect. This brings us to a beneficent law of nature, which underlies the whole subject of early training, and especially so this case of the child whose mother must bring him forth a second time into a life of beauty and harmony. To put it in an old form of words—the words of Thomas à Kempis—what seems to me the fundamental law of education is no more than this: “Habit is driven out by habit.” People have always known that “Use is second nature,” but the reason why, and the scope of the saying, these are discoveries of recent days.

A child has an odious custom, so constant, that it is his quality, will be his *character* if you let him alone; he is spiteful, he is sly, he is sullen. No one is to blame for it; it was born in him. What are you to do with such inveterate habit of nature? Just this; treat it as a bad *habit*, and set up the opposite good habit. Henry is more than mischievous; he is a malicious little boy. There are always tears in the nursery, because, with “pinches, nips, and bobs,” he is making some child wretched. Even his pets are not safe; he has done his canary to death by poking at it with a stick through the bars of its cage; howls from his dog, screeches from his cat, betray him in some vicious trick. He makes fearful faces at his timid little sister; sets traps with string for the housemaid with her water-cans to fall over; there is no end to the malicious tricks, beyond the mere

savagery of untrained boyhood, which come to his mother's ear. What is to be done? "Oh, he will grow out of it!" say the more hopeful who pin their faith to time. But many an experienced mother will say, "You can't cure him; what is in will out, and he will be a pest to society all his life." Yet the child may be cured in a month if the mother will set herself to the task with both hands and set purpose; at any rate, the cure may be well begun, and that is half done.

Let the month of treatment be a deliciously happy month to him, he living all the time in the sunshine of his mother's smile. Let him not be left to himself to meditate or carry out ugly pranks. Let him feel himself always under a watchful, loving, and *approving eye*. Keep him happily occupied, well amused. All this, to break the old custom which is assuredly broken when a certain length of time goes by without its repetition. But one habit drives out another. Lay new lines in the old place. Open avenues of kindness for him. Let him enjoy, daily, hourly, the pleasure of pleasing. Get him into the way of making little plots for the pleasure of the rest—a plaything of his contriving, a dish of strawberries of his gathering, shadow rabbits to amuse the baby; take him on kind errands to poor neighbours, carrying and giving of his own. For a whole month the child's whole heart is flowing out in deeds and schemes and thoughts of loving-kindness, and the ingenuity which spent itself in malicious tricks becomes an acquisition to his family when his devices are benevolent. Yes; but where is his mother to get time in these encroaching days to put Henry under special treatment? She has other children and other duties, and simply cannot give herself up for a month or a week to one child. If the boy were ill, in danger,

would she find time for him then? Would not other duties go to the wall, and leave her little son, for the time, her chief object in life? Now here is a point all parents are not enough awake to—that mental and moral ailments require prompt, purposeful, curative treatment, to which the parents must devote themselves for a short time, just as they would to a sick child. Neither punishing him nor letting him alone—the two lines of treatment most in favour—ever cured a child of any moral evil. If parents recognised the efficacy and the immediate effect of treatment, they would never allow the spread of ill weeds. For let this be borne in mind, whatever ugly quality disfigures the child, he is but as a garden overgrown with weeds, the more prolific the weeds, the more fertile the soil; he has within him every possibility of beauty of life and character. Get rid of the weeds and foster the flowers. It is hardly too much to say that most of the failures in life or character made by man or woman are due to the happy-go-lucky philosophy of the parents. They say, “The child is so young; he does not know any better; but all that will come right as he grows up.” Now, a fault of character left to itself can do no other than strengthen.

An objection may be raised to this counsel of short and determined curative treatment. The good results do not last, it is said; a week or two of neglect, and you lose the ground gained: Henry is as likely as ever to grow up of the “tiger” order, a Steerforth or a Grandcourt. Here science comes to help us to cheerful certainty.

There is no more interesting subject of inquiry open just now than that of the interaction between the thoughts of the mind and the configuration of the brain. The fair conclusion appears to be that each is



greatly the cause of the other ; that the character of the persistent thoughts actually shapes the cerebrum, while on the configuration of this organ depends in turn the manner of thoughts we think. Now, thought is, for the most part, automatic. We think, without intention or effort, as we have been accustomed to think, just as we walk or write without any conscious arrangement of muscles. Mozart could write an overture, laughing all the time at the little jokes his wife made to keep him awake ; to be sure he had thought it out before, and there it was, ready to be written ; but he did not consciously try for these musical thoughts, they simply came to him in proper succession. Coleridge thought "Kubla Khan" in his sleep, and wrote it when he awoke ; and, indeed, he might as well have been asleep all the time for all he had to do with the production of most of his thoughts.

"Over the buttons she falls asleep,  
And stitches them on in a dream,"—

is very possible and likely. For one thing which we consciously set ourselves to think about, a thousand words and acts come from us every day of their own accord ; we don't think of them at all. But all the same, only a poet or a musician could thus give forth poetry or music, and it is the words and acts which come from us without *conscious* thought which afford the true measure of what we are. Perhaps this is why such serious weight is attached to our every "idle word"—words spoken without intention or volition.

We are getting, by degrees, to Henry and his bad habits. Somehow or other, the nervous tissue of the cerebrum "grows to" the thoughts that are allowed free course in the mind. *How*, Science hardly ventures to guess as yet ; but, for the sake of illustration,



let us imagine that certain thoughts of the mind run to and fro in the nervous substance of the cerebrum until they have made a way there : busy traffic in the same order of thoughts will always be kept up, for there is the easy way for them to run in. Now, take the child with an inherited tendency to a resentful temper : he has begun to think resentful thoughts : finds them easy and gratifying ; he goes on ; evermore the ugly traffic becomes more easy and natural, and resentfulness is rapidly becoming *himself*, that trait in his character which people couple with his name.

But one custom overcomes another. The watchful mother sets up new tracks in other directions ; and she sees to it, that while she is leading new thoughts through the new way, the old, deeply worn "*way of thinking*" is quite disused. Now, the cerebrum is in a state of rapid waste and rapid growth. The new growth takes shape from the new thoughts : the old is lost in the steady waste, and the child is *reformed*, physically as well as morally and mentally. That the nervous tissue of the cerebrum should be thus the *instrument* of the mind need not surprise us when we think how the muscles and joints of the tumbler, the vocal organs of the singer, the finger-ends of the watchmaker, the palate of the tea-taster, grow to the uses they are steadily put to ; and, much more, both in the case of brain and of bodily organs, grow to the uses they are *earliest* put to.

This meets in a wonderful way the case of the parent who sets himself to cure a moral failing. He sets up the course of new thoughts, and hinders those of the past, until the *new* thoughts shall have become automatic and run of their own accord. All the time a sort of disintegration is going on in the place that held the disused thoughts ; and here is the parent's

advantage. If the boy return (as, from inherited tendency, he still may do) to his old habits of thought, behold there is no more place for them in his physical being ; to make a new place is a work of time, and in this work the parent can overtake and hinder him without much effort.

Here, indeed, more than anywhere, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour but in vain that build it ;" but surely intelligent co-operation in this divine work is our bounden duty and service. The training of the will, the instruction of the conscience, and, so far as it lies with us, the development of the divine life in the child, are carried on simultaneously with this training in the habits of a good life ; and these last will carry the child safely over the season of infirm will, immature conscience, until he is able to take, under direction from above, the conduct of his life, the moulding of his character into his own hands. It is a comfort to believe that there is even a material register of our educational labours being made in the very substance of the child's brain ; and, certainly, here we have a note of warning as to the danger of letting ill ways alone in the hope that all will come right by-and-by.

Some parents may consider all this as heavy hearing ; that even to "think on these things" is enough to take the joy and spontaneousness out of their sweet relationship ; and that, after all, parents' love and the grace of God should be sufficient for the bringing up of children. No one can feel on this subject more sincere humility than those who have not the honour to be parents ; the insight and love with which parents—mothers most so—are blest, is a divine gift which fills lookers-on with reverence, even in many a cottage home ; but we have only to observe

how many fond parents make foolish children to be assured that something more is wanted. There are appointed ways, not always the old paths, but new ones, opened up step by step as we go. The labour of the mother who sets herself to understand her work is not increased, but infinitely lightened; and as for life being made heavy with the thought of these things, once make them our own, and we act upon them as naturally as upon such knowledge—scientific also—as, loose your hold of a cup—and it falls. A little pains-taking thought and effort in the first place, and all comes easy.

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## CHAPTER X

### BIBLE LESSONS

“The history of England is now reduced to a game at cards,—the problems of mathematics to puzzles and riddles. . . . There wants but one step further, and the Creed and Ten Commandments may be taught in the same manner, without the necessity of the grave face, deliberate tone of recital, and devout attention hitherto exacted from the well-governed childhood of this realm.”—*Waverley*.

THAT parents should make over the religious education of their children to a Sunday-school is, no doubt, as indefensible as if they sent them for their meals to a table maintained by the public bounty. We “at home” plead “not guilty” to this particular count. Our Sunday-schools are used by those toil-worn and little-learned parents who are willing to accept at the hands of the more leisured classes this service of the religious teaching of their children. That is, the Sunday-school is, at present, a necessary evil, an acknowledgment that there are parents so hard pressed that they are unable for their first duty. Here we have the theory of the Sunday-school—the parents who can, teach their children at home on Sunday, and substitutes step in to act for those who can not. It is upon this delightful theory of the Sunday-school that a clergyman\* at the Antipodes has taken action. Never does it appear to occur to him that the members of the upper and middle classes do not need to be

\* The Rev. E. Jackson, sometime of Sydney.

definitely and regularly instructed in religion—"from a child." His contention is, only, that such children should not be taught at Sunday-school, but at home, and by their parents; and the main object of his parochial "Parents' Union" is to help parents in this work. These are some of the rules:—

1. The object of the Union shall be to unite, strengthen, and assist fathers and mothers in the discharge of their parental duties.

2. Members shall be pledged, by the fact of their joining, to supervise the education of their own children, and to urge the responsibility of the parental relationship upon other parents.

3. Lesson sketches shall be furnished monthly to each family in connection with the Union.

4. Members shall bring their children to the monthly catechising, and sit with them, &c., &c.

Probably the "lesson-sketches" are to secure that the children do just such Bible-lessons at home with their parents on Sunday as they have hitherto done at the Sunday-school with teachers.

It seems to be contemplated that parents of every class will undertake their proper duties in this matter, and that the Sunday-school may be allowed to drop, the clergyman undertaking instead to ascertain, by means of catechising, that certain work is done month by month.

The scheme seems full of promise. Nothing should do more to strengthen the bonds of family life than that the children should learn religion at the lips of their parents; and, to grow up in a church which takes constant heed of you from baptism or infancy, until, we will not say confirmation, but through manhood and womanhood, until the end, should give the right tone to corporate life.



No doubt we have parishes, and even whole denominations, in which the young people are taken hold of from first to last ; but then it is by clergy, teachers, class leaders, and so on ; and all parents do not regard it as an unmixed blessing that the most serious part of their children's training should be undertaken by outsiders. The thing that seems most worthy of imitation in this Australian movement is, that parents themselves are recognised as the fit instructors of their children in the best things, and that they are led to acknowledge some responsibility to the Church with regard to the instruction they give.

But do we manage these things so well "at home" that we have no occasion to look about us for hints ? It may be in the memories of some of us, that in May 1889, a Committee of the House of Laymen for the Province of Canterbury was appointed to examine into the religious education of the upper and middle classes.\* The committee considered that they might obtain a good basis for their investigations by examining into the religious knowledge of boys entering school. They sent a paper of inquiries to sixty-two head-masters, most of whom sent replies ; and from these replies the committee were led to conclude that, "for the most part, the standard of religious education attained by boys before going to school is far below what might be hoped or expected ; and that even this standard, thus ascertained to be far too low, is deteriorating ; and further, that the chief cause of deterioration is considered to be the want of home-teaching and religion."

\* See "Report of the Committee of the House of Laymen for the Province of Canterbury on the Duty of the Church with regard to the Religious Education of the Upper and Middle Classes."—*Nat. Soc. Depository, Westminster.*

Here is matter of grave consideration for us all—for, though the investigation was conducted by Churchmen, it naturally covered boys of various denominations attending public and middle-class schools; the distinctive character of the religious education was the subject of separate inquiry. No doubt there are many beautiful exceptions—families brought up in quiet homes in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but if it is, as some of us fear, a fact that there is a tendency among parents of the middle and upper classes to let the religious education of their children take care of itself, it is worth while to ask, What is the reason? and, What is the remedy? Many reasons are assigned for this alleged failure in parental duty—social claims, the restive temper of the young people and their impatience of religious teaching, and much else. But these reasons are inadequate. Parents are, on the whole, very much alive to their responsibilities; perhaps there has never been a generation more earnest and conscientious than the young parents of these days. All the same, these thoughtful young parents do not lay themselves out to teach their children religion, before all things.

The fact is, our religious life has suffered, and by-and-by our national character will suffer, for the discredit thrown upon the Bible by adverse critics. We rightly regard the Bible as the entire collection of our Sacred Books. We have absolutely nothing to teach but what we find written therein. But we no longer go to the Bible with the old confidence: our religion is fading into a sentiment, not easy to impart; we wait until the young people shall conceive it for themselves. Meantime, we give them such æsthetic culture as should tend to develop those

needs of the soul that find their satisfaction in worship. The whole superstructure of "liberal" religious thought is miserably shaky, and no wonder there is some shrinking from exposing it to the Ithuriel's spear of the definite and searching young mind. For we love this flimsy habitation we have builded. It bears a shadowy resemblance to the old home of our souls, and we cling to it with a tender sentiment which the younger generation might not understand.

Are we then unhoused? Undoubtedly we are upon one assumption—that assumption which it takes a brilliant novelist to put forth in its naked asperity—"Miracles do not happen." The educated mind is more essentially logical than we are apt to suppose. Remove the keystone of miracle and the arch tumbles about our ears. The ostentatious veneration for the Person of Christ, as separated from the "mythical" miraculous element, is, alas! no more than a spurious sentiment toward a self-evolved conception. Eliminate the "miraculous" and the whole fabric of Christianity disappears; and not only so, what have we to do with that older revelation of "the Lord, the Lord, a God full of compassion and gracious"? Do we say, Nay, we keep this; here is no miracle; and, of Christ, have we not the inimitable Sermon on the Mount—sufficient claim on our allegiance? No, we have not; therein are we taught to pray, to consider the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air, and to remember that the very hairs of our head are all numbered. Here we have the doctrine of the personal dealing, the particular providence of God, which is of the very essence of miracle. If "miracles do not happen," it is folly and presumption to expect in providence and invite in prayer the faintest dis-

turbance of that course of events which is fixed by inevitable law. The educated mind is severely logical, though an effort of the will may keep us from following out our conclusions to the bitter end. What have we left? A God who, of necessity, can have no personal dealings with you or me, for such dealings would be of the nature of a miracle: a God, prayer to whom, in the face of such certainty, becomes blasphemous. How dare we approach the Highest with requests which, in the nature of things (as we conceive), it is impossible He should grant?

We cannot pray, and we cannot trust, may be; yet we are not utterly godless; we can admire, adore, worship, in uttermost humility. But how? What shall we adore? The Divine Being can be known to us only through His attributes; He is a God of love and a God of justice; full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. But these are attributes which can only be conceived of as in action, from Person to person. How be gracious and merciful unless to a being in need of grace and mercy? Grant that grace and mercy may modify the slightest circumstance in a man's existence, spiritual or temporal, and you grant the whole question of "miracles"—that is, that it is possible to God to act otherwise than through such inevitable laws as we are able to recognise. Refuse to concede "the miraculous element," and the Shepherd of Israel has departed from our midst; we are left orphaned in a world undone.

Such and so great are the issues of that question of "miracle" with which we are fond of dallying, with a smile here and a shrug there, and a special sneer for that story of the swine that ran violently down a

steep place, because we know so much about the dim thoughts of the brute creation—living under our eyes, indeed, but curiously out of our ken. Grant the possibility of miracles, that is, of the voluntary action of a Personal God, and who will venture to assign limits of less or more ?

How long halt we betwixt two opinions?—to the law and to the testimony. Let us boldly accept the alternative which Hume proposes, however superciliously. Let it be, that, “no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish.” Even so. We believe that Christ rose again the third day and ascended into heaven ; or we credit the far more miraculous hypothesis that “there is no God” ; or, anyway, the God of revelation, in His adorable Personality, has ceased to be for us. There is no middle way. Natural law, as we understand it, has nothing to do with these issues ; not that the Supreme abrogates His laws, but that our knowledge of “natural law” is so agonisingly limited and superficial, that we are incompetent to decide whether a break in the narrow circle, within which our knowledge is hemmed, is or is not an opening into a wider circle, where what appears to us as an extraordinary exception does but exemplify the general rule.

We would not undervalue the solid fruits of Biblical criticism, even the most adverse. This should be a great gain in the spiritual life—that, henceforth, a miracle is accredited, not merely by the fact that it is recorded in the sacred history, but by its essential fitness with the Divine Character ; just as, if we may reverently compare human things with divine, we say of a friend, “Oh, he would never do that !” or, “That



is just like him." Tried by this test, how unostentatious, simple, meekly serviceable are the miracles of Christ; how utterly divine it is

"To have all power, and be as having none!"

The mind which is saturated with the Gospel story in all its sweet reasonableness, which has absorbed the more confused and broken rays wherein the Light of the World is manifested in Old Testament story, will perhaps be the least tempted to the disloyalty of "honest doubt;"—for disloyalty to the most close and sacred of all relationships it is, though we must freely concede that such doubt is the infirmity of noble minds. Believing that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, that the man is established in the Christian faith according as the child has been instructed, the question of questions for us is, how to secure that the children shall be well grounded in the Scriptures by their parents, and shall pursue the study with intelligence, reverence, and delight.

## CHAPTER XI

### *FAITH AND DUTY*

#### REVIEWS

##### I

EDUCATION, properly understood, is the science of life, and every attempt to formulate this science is to be hailed with interest, and with a measure of gratitude in proportion to its success. Thinking minds everywhere are engaged in furnishing their quota towards this great work, in one or another of its aspects, physical, social, religious. We see at once the importance of every attempt to solve social problems or problems of faith, as helping us to understand those "laws of nature" and "ways of men," the love, and dutiful attitude of the will towards which Mr. Huxley considers to be the sole practical outcome of education. We have before us three important works\* on these lines. One deals with the problems of "secular" morality from an American point of view; the second with the whole problem of national education from a French and "scientific" standpoint. The third is

\* "The Moral Instruction of Children." 6s. By Felix Adler. Published by Edward Arnold.

"Education from a National Standpoint." By Alfred Fouillée. Translated and edited by W. J. Greenstreet, M.A. Published by Edward Arnold.

"Faith." Eleven Sermons, with a Preface, by Rev. H. C. Beeching. Published by Percival & Co.

not professedly an educational work. It deals with "the ways of men," but with the ways of men as they are concerned with the ways and will of God. That is, it deals with the deep-seated springs out of which are the issues of life. As the true educationalist works from within outwards, he will probably find much aid in a work whose outlook on life is from the standpoint of "faith."

Mr. Felix Adler, in "The Moral Instruction of Children," undertakes a by no means easy task in setting himself to solve the problem of unsectarian moral instruction. He brings unusual qualifications to the work—a wide outlook, philosophic training, and that catholic love of literature and knowledge of books which is essential to the teacher of morals. The work before us is one which should find a place on every educated parent's bookshelves, not perhaps to be swallowed whole as a "complete guide," but to be studied with careful attention and some freedom of choice as to which counsel of perfection is worthy to be acted upon, and which other counsel may be rejected as not fitting in with that scheme of educational thought which the parent has already made for himself. Mr. Adler is most seriously handicapped at the outset. He writes for American schools, in which the first condition of moral instruction is that it must be unsectarian. This he, rightly or wrongly, interprets, to exclude all theistic teaching whatever; that is to say, the child he writes for has no sanctions beyond those he finds in his own breast. For example: "It is the business of the moral instructor in the school to deliver to his pupils the subject-matter of morality, but not to deal with the sanctions of it. He says to the pupil, 'Thou shalt not lie.' He takes it for granted that the pupil feels the force of this commandment,

and acknowledges that he ought to yield obedience to it. For my part, I should suspect of quibbling and dishonest intention any boy or girl who would ask me, Why ought I not to lie? I should hold up before such a child the *ought* in all its awful majesty. The right to reason about these matters cannot be conceded until after the mind has attained a certain maturity."

Where does the *ought* get its awful majesty? That there is in the human breast an infallible sense of "ought" is an error prolific of much evil. It is a popular idea to-day that it is right to do that which the doer holds to be right; or, as it is popularly expressed, a man does all that can be expected of him when he acts 'according to his "lights." Now, a very slight acquaintance with history demonstrates that every persecution and most outrages, from the Inquisition to Thuggee, are the outcome of that same majesty of "ought," as it makes its voice heard in the breast of an individual or of a community. To attempt to treat of morals without dealing with the sanctions of morality is to work from the circumference instead of from the centre.

*Moses, Moses und immer Moses!* says a German pedagogue of the modern school, who writes in hot disdain of the old school system, in which ten or twelve, and, in some of the German States, fifteen or sixteen hours a week were devoted to Bible-teaching. We in England, and they in America, also rebel against the Bible as a class-book. Education-ists say there is so much else to be learned, that this prolonged study of sacred literature is a grievous waste of time; and many religious persons, on the other hand, object on the ground that it is not good to make the Bible common as a class-book. But it is singular that so few educationalists recognise

that the Bible is not a single book, but a classic literature of wonderful beauty and interest; that, apart from its Divine sanctions and religious teaching, from all that we understand by "Revelation," the Bible, as a mere instrument of education, is, at the very least as valuable as the classics of Greece or Rome. Here is poetry, the rhythm of which soothes even the jaded brain past taking pleasure in any other. Here is history, based on such broad, clear lines, such dealing of slow and sure and even-handed justice to the nations, such stories of national sins and national repentances, that the student realises, as from no other history, the solidarity of the race, the brotherhood—and, if we may call it so—the individuality of the nations. Here is philosophy which, of all the philosophies which have been propounded, is alone adequate to the interpretation of human life. We say not a word here of that which is the *raison d'être* of the Bible—its teaching of religion, its revelation of God to man; but, to say only one word more, all the literatures of the world put together utterly fail to give us a system of ethics, in precept and example, motive and sanction, complete as that to which we have been born as our common inheritance in the Bible.

For 1700 years, roughly speaking, the Bible has been the school-book of modern Europe; its teaching, conveyed directly or indirectly, more or less pure, has been the basis upon which the whole superstructure of not only religious but ethical and, to some extent, literary training rested. Now, the Bible as a lesson-book is tabooed; and educationalists are called upon to produce what shall take its place in the origination of ideas and the formation of character. This is the task to which Mr. Adler sets himself; and



that he is at all successful is obviously due to the fact that his own mind is impregnated with the Bible-lore and the sacred law which he does not feel himself at liberty to propound to his students. But this prepossession of the author's makes his work very helpful and suggestive to parents who desire to take the Bible as the groundwork and the sanction of that moral teaching which they are glad to supplement from other sources.

May we recommend the following suggestion to parents :—

“Parents and teachers should endeavour to answer such questions as these : When do the first stirrings of the moral sense appear in the child? How do they manifest themselves? What are the emotional and the intellectual equipments of the child at different periods, and how do these correspond with its moral outfit? At what time does conscience enter on the scene? To what acts or omissions does the child apply the terms right or wrong? If observations of this kind were made with care and duly recorded, the science of education would have at its disposal a considerable quantity of material, from which, no doubt, valuable generalisations might be deduced. Every mother, especially, should keep a diary in which to note the successive phases of her child's physical, mental, and moral growth, with particular attention to the moral; so that parents may be enabled to make a timely forecast of their children's character, to foster in them every germ of good, and by prompt precautions to suppress, or at least restrain, what is bad.”

We are glad to find that Mr. Adler reinstates fairy-tales. He says, justly, that much of the selfishness of the world is due, not to actual hard-heartedness,

but to a lack of imaginative power ; and adds, "I hold that something, nay, much, has been gained if a child has learned to take the wishes out of its heart, as it were, and to project them on the screen of fancy." The German *Märchen* hold the first place in his regards. He says: "They represent the childhood of mankind, and it is for this reason that they never cease to appeal to children."

"But how shall we handle these *Märchen*? and what method shall we employ in putting them to account for our special purpose? My first counsel is, Tell the story. Do not give it to the child to read. The child, as it listens to the *Märchen*, looks up with wide-opened eyes to the face of the person who tells the story, and thrills responsive to the touch of the earlier life of the race, which thus falls upon its own." That is, our author feels, and rightly so, that traditions should be orally delivered. This is well worth noting. His second counsel is equally important. "Do not," he says, "take the moral plum out of the fairy-tale pudding, but let the child enjoy it as a whole. . . . Treat the moral element as an incident, emphasise it indeed, but incidentally. Pluck it as a wayside flower."

Mr. Felix Adler's third counsel is, to eliminate from the stories whatever is merely superstitious, merely a relic of ancient animism, and, again, whatever is objectionable on moral grounds. In this connection he discusses the vexed question of how far we should acquaint children with the existence of evil in the world. His conclusion is one with which we shall probably be inclined to agree.

"My own view," he says, "is that we should speak in the child's hearing only of those lesser forms of evil, physical or moral, with which it is already

acquainted." On this ground he would rule out all the cruel step-mother stories, the unnatural father stories, and so on; though, probably, most of us would make an exception in favour of Cinderella, and its charming German rendering *Aschenbrödel*.

*Fables*, according to our author, should form the basis of moral instruction at the second stage; probably when children emerge from the nursery. We have all grown up on "Æsop's Fables," and "The Dog in the Manger," "King Log," "The Frog and the Stork," have passed into the current coinage of our thought. But it is interesting to be reminded that the so-called Æsop's fables are infinitely older than the famous Greek story-teller, and are, for the most part, of Asiatic origin. We are reminded that it is important to keep the origin of this fable before us, and exercise discrimination in our choice of those which we use to convey moral ideas to our children. Such fables as "The Oak and the Reed," "The Brazen and the Earthen Pot," "The Kite and the Wolf," Mr. Adler would reject, as breathing of Eastern subserviency and fear. But possibly for the very reason that the British backbone is little disposed to bow before man or circumstances, the lessons of life culled by peoples of other habits and other thoughts may be quite specially useful to the English child. Anyway, we should lose some of the most charming fables if we cut out all that savours of the wisdom of the East. The fables Mr. Felix Adler specially commends are those which hold up virtue for our praise or evil for our censure; such as *Cowardice*, the fable of the "Stag and the Fawn;" *Vanity*, "The Peacock and the Crane;" *Greediness*, "The Dog and the Shadow."

"In the third part of our primary course, we shall

use selected stories from the classical literature of the Hebrews, and later on from that of Greece, particularly the 'Odyssey' and the 'Iliad.' "

Here we begin to be at issue with our author. We should not present Bible stories as carrying only the same moral sanction as the myths of ancient Greece; neither should we defer their introduction until the child has gone through a moral course of fairy-tales and a moral course of fables. He should not be able to recall a time before the sweet stories of old filled his imagination; he should have heard the voice of the Lord God in the garden in the cool of the evening; should have been an awed spectator where the angels ascended and descended upon Jacob's stony pillow; should have followed Christ through the cornfield on the Sabbath-day, and sat in the rows of the hungry multitudes—so long ago that the sacred scenes form the unconscious background of his thoughts. All things are possible to the little child, and the touch of the spiritual upon our material world, the difficult problems, the hard sayings, which are an offence—in the Bible sense of the word—to his elders, present no difficulties to the child's all-embracing faith. We would not say—far otherwise—that every Bible story is fit for children, because it is a Bible story; neither would we analyse too carefully, nor draw hard and fast lines to distinguish what we would call history from that of which it may be said, "Without a parable spake He not unto them."

The child is not an exegetical student. The moral teaching, the spiritual revelations, the lovely imagery of the Bible, are the things with which he is concerned, and of these he cannot have too much. As Mr. Adler says, "The narrative of the Bible is saturated

with the moral spirit, the moral issues are everywhere to the forefront. Duty, guilt and its punishment, the conflict of conscience with inclination, are the leading themes. The Hebrew people seem to have been endowed with what may be called a moral genius, and especially did they emphasise the filial and fraternal duties. Now, it is precisely these duties that must be impressed on young children."

Let us see how Mr. Adler would use the Bible narratives. We have only space for a fragmentary sentence here and there: "Once upon a time there were two children, Adam and Eve. Adam was a fine and noble-looking lad." . . . "It was so warm that the children never needed to go indoors." . . . "And the snake kept on whispering, 'Just take one bite of it; nobody sees you.'" . . . "You, Adam, must learn to labour, and you, Eve, to be patient and self-denying for others," &c.

We leave it to our readers to decide whether "treatment" improves the Bible narrative, or whether this is the sort of thing to lay hold of a child's imagination.

Mr. Ruskin tells us that his incomparable style is due entirely to his early familiarity with the Bible classics. It is a mistake to translate Bible stories into slipshod English, even when the narrator keeps close to the facts of the narrative. The rhythm and cadence of Biblical phraseology is as charming to a child as to his elders, if not more so. Read your Bible story to the child, bit by bit; get him to tell you in his own words (keeping as close as he can to the Bible words) what you have read, and then, if you like, talk about it; but not much. Above all, do not let us attempt a "practical commentary on every verse in Genesis," to quote the title of a work lately published.

Two points it seems worth while to dwell upon



here. Is it advisable to tell the children the stories of the Bible miracles in an age when the possibility of miracles is so hotly discussed? In the first place, all that the most advanced scientists have to urge against "miracles" is that precisely such phenomena have not come under their personal notice; but they, before all people, are open to admit that nothing is impossible and that no experience is final. In the second place, as for the moral and spiritual instruction which the story of the miracle affords, it is immaterial whether, in the particular case in question, a historical fact is recorded, or whether, in this case also, it is true that "without a parable spake He not unto them." It is the vital, not the historical, truth of the story which matters to the child. As for the latter, he is a bold critic, and well in advance of the scientific knowledge of the day, who ventures to say, "*This* is possible, *that other* is impossible."

The second point worthy of our attention in regard to Bible-teaching is, Is the Bible to be taken whole and undivided, or to be dealt out to children as they are able to bear it? There are recitals in the Bible which we certainly should not put into the hands of children in any other book. We should do well to ask ourselves gravely, if we have any warrant for supposing that our children will be shielded from the suggestions of evil which we deliberately lay before them; or if there is any Divine law requiring that the whole Bible—which is not only the Word of God, but is also a collection of the legal, literary, historical, poetical, philosophical, ethical, and polemical writings of a nation—should be placed altogether and all at once in the hands of a curious child, as soon as he is able to read? When will our superstitious reverence for the mere *letter* of the Scriptures allow us to break

the Bible up, to be read, as all other literature is, in separate books; and, for the children anyway, those passages "expunged" which are not fit for their reading; and even those which are perfectly uninteresting, as, for example, long genealogies? How delightful it would be that each birthday should bring with it a gift of a new book of the Bible, progressing in difficulty from year to year, beautifully bound and illustrated, and printed in clear, inviting type and on good paper. One can imagine the Christian child collecting his library of sacred books with great joy and interest, and making a diligent and delighted study of the volume for the year in its appointed time. The next best thing, perhaps, is to read bit by bit to the children, as beautifully as may be, requiring them to tell the story, after listening, as nearly in the Bible words as they can.

But to return to Mr. Adler. Here is a valuable suggestion: "Children should be taught to observe moral pictures before any attempt is made to deduce moral principles. But certain simple *rules* should be given to the very young—must, indeed, be given them—for their guidance. Now, in the legislation ascribed to Moses, we find a number of rules fit for children, and a collection of these rules might be made for the use of schools, such as: Ye shall not lie; ye shall not deceive one another; ye shall take no bribe; thou shalt not go about as a tale-bearer among thy fellows," and so on—a very useful collection of sixteen rules by way of specimen.

Farther on we read, "The story of David's life is replete with dramatic interest. It may be arranged in a series of pictures. First picture, David and Goliath—*i.e.*, skill pitted against brute strength, or the deserved punishment of a bully." Conceive the

barren, common, self-complete and self-complacent product of "moral" teaching on this level!

In his treatment of the "Odyssey" and the "Iliad," Mr. Adler makes some good points: "My father, anxious that I should become a good man, made me learn all the poems of Homer," Xenophon makes one of his characters say: and here we have suggestive lines as to how the great epics may be used for example of life and instruction in manners.

What so inspiring as the story of Ulysses to the boy in search of adventures? and what greater stimulus to courage, prudence, presence of mind, than in the escapes of the hero? "Ulysses is the type of sagacity as well as of bravery; his mind teems with inventions." The ethical elements of the "Odyssey" are said to be conjugal affection, filial conduct (Telemachus), presence of mind, and veneration shown to grandparents (Laertes). Friendly relations with dependents might have been added, as illustrated by the lovely story of the nurse Eurycleia recognising Ulysses when his wife sat by with stony face. Friendship, again, in the story of Achilles' grief for Patroclus. Mr. Adler treats the Homeric stories with more grace and sympathy, and with less ruthless violation, than he metes out to those of the Bible, but here again we trace the initial weakness of "secular" morality. The "Odyssey" and the "Iliad" are religious poems or they are nothing. The whole motive is religious, every incident is supernaturally directed. The heroic inspiration is entirely wanting, if we fail to bear in mind that the characters do and suffer with superlative courage and fortitude, only because they willed to do and suffer, in all things, the will of the gods. The acquiescence of the will with that which they guessed, however darkly, of the divine will, is the truly inspiring quality of the

Homeric heroes; and here, as much as in the teaching of Bible morality, "secular" ethics are at fault.

The third section of Mr. Adler's work consists of lessons on duty. Here again we have excellent counsels and delightful illustrations. "The teacher should always take the moral habit for granted. He should never give his pupils to understand that he and they are about to examine, whether, for instance, it is wrong or not wrong to lie. The commandment against lying is assumed, and its obligation acknowledged at the outset." This we heartily agree with, and especially we like the apparently inadvertent use of the word "commandment," which concedes the whole question at issue—that is, that the idea of duty is a relative one, depending on an Authority supreme and intimate, which embraces the thoughts of the heart and the issues of the life.

The story of Hillel, as illustrating the duty of acquiring knowledge, is very charming, and is deeply interesting to the psychologist, as illustrating that a naturally implanted desire for knowledge is one of the springs of action in the human breast. The motives proposed for seeking knowledge are poor and inadequate; to succeed in life, to gain esteem, to satisfy yourself, and even to be able, possibly, to benefit others, are by no means soul-compelling motives. The child who is encouraged to learn, because to learn is his particular duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him, has the strongest of conceivable motives, in the sense that he is rendering that which is required of him by the Supreme Authority.

This one note of feebleness runs through the whole treatment of the subject. The drowning man is supposed to counsel himself to "be brave, because as a



human being you are superior to the forces of Nature, because there is something in you—your moral self—over which the forces of Nature have no power, because what happens to you in your private character is not important; but it is important that you assert the dignity of humanity to the last breath.” This reads rather well; but how much finer is the attitude of the man who struggles manfully to save the life that *God has given him!*

The chapter on the influence of manual training is well worthy of consideration. The concluding sentence runs: “It is a cheering and encouraging thought that technical labour, which is the source of our material aggrandisement, may also become, when employed in the education of the young, the means of enlarging their manhood, quickening their intellect, and strengthening their character.”

We have taken up Mr. Adler's work so fully because it is one of the most serious and successful attempts with which we are acquainted to present a graduated course of ethics suitable for children of all ages. Though we are at issue with the author on the all-important point of moral sanctions, we very earnestly commend the work to the perusal of parents. The Christian parent will assuredly present the thought of Law in connection with a Law-giver, and will supplement the thousand valuable suggestions he will find here with his own strong conviction that “Ought” is of the Lord God. But even the Christian child suffers from what may be called slipshod moral teaching. The failings of the good are a source of sorrow and surprise to the moralist as well as to the much-endeavouring and often-failing Christian soul. That temptation and sin are inseparable from our present condition may be allowed; but that an earnest and



sincere Christian should be habitually guilty of failing in candour, frankness, justice to the characters and opinions of others, should be intemperate in censure, and—dare we say it?—spiteful in criticism, is possibly to be traced, not to fallible human nature, but to defective education.

The ethical idea has never been fairly and fully presented to the mind on these vulnerable points. The man is unable to give due weight to the opinions of another, because the child has not been instructed in the duty of candour. There is little doubt that careful, methodical, ethical instruction, with abundant illustration, and—we need not add—inspired by the thought, “God wills it,” should, if such instruction could be made general, have an appreciable effect in elevating the national character. Therefore, let us repeat, we hail with gratitude such a contribution to the practical ethics of the nursery and schoolroom as Mr. Adler’s work on “*The Moral Instruction of Children.*”

## CHAPTER XII

### FAITH AND DUTY

#### II

SINCE Locke established a school of English educational thought, based on English philosophy, our tendency has been exclusively towards naturalism, if not materialism ; to the exclusion of a vital element in education—the force of the idea.

Madame de Staël has a remarkable passage concerning this tendency in English philosophy which, though we may not be disposed to admit her conclusions *en bloc*, should certainly give us pause, and lead us to consider whether we should not wisely modify the tendencies of our national thought by laying ourselves open to foreign influences :—

“Hobbes prit à la lettre la philosophie qui fait dériver toutes nos idées des impressions des sens ; il n'en craignit point les conséquences, et il a dit hardiment *que l'âme était, soumise à la nécessité comme la société au despotisme.* Le culte des tous les sentiments élevés et purs est tellement consolidé en Angleterre par les institutions politiques et religieuses, que les spéculations de l'esprit tournent autour de ces imposantes colonnes sans jamais les ébranler. Hobbes eut donc peu de partisans dans son pays ; mais l'influence de Locke fut plus universelle. Comme son caractère était morale et religieuse, il ne se permit aucun des

raisonnements corrompteurs qui derivaient nécessairement de sa métaphysique; et la plupart de ses compatriotes, en l'adoptant, ont eu comme lui la noble inconséquence de séparer les résultats des principes, tandis que Hume et les philosophes français, après avoir admis le système, l'ont appliqué d'une manière beaucoup plus logique.

“La métaphysique de Locke n'a eu d'autre effet sur les esprits, en Angleterre, que de ternir un peu leur originalité naturelle; quand même elle desséchait la source des grandes pensées philosophiques, elle ne saurait détruire le sentiment religieux, qui sait si bien y suppléer; mais cette métaphysique reçue dans le reste de l'Europe, l'Allemagne exceptée, a été l'une des principales causes de l'immoralité dont on s'est fait une théorie pour en mieux assurer la pratique.”

It is well that we should recognise the continuity of English educational thought, and perceive that we have in Spencer and Baine the lineal descendants of the earlier philosophers. Probably the chief source of weakness in our attempt to formulate a science of education is that we do not perceive that education is the outcome of philosophy. We deal with the issue and ignore the source. Hence our efforts lack continuity and definite aim. We are content to pick up a suggestion here, a practical hint there, without even troubling ourselves to consider what is that scheme of life of which such hints and suggestions are the output.

Mr. Greenstreet's translation of M. Fouillée's remarkable work\* should not be without its effect upon the burning questions of the hour. As the translator well says in his preface: “The spirit of reform is in the air; the question of the retention of Greek at

\* “Education from a National Standpoint.”

the Universities is but a ripple of the great wave that seems ready to burst upon us and to obliterate the characteristic features of our national system of education. . . . A glance at the various forms of the educational systems obtaining in Europe and America is sufficient to betray to the observant eye how near to the verge of chaos we are standing."

These are words of insight and wisdom, but let us not therefore despair as though the end of all things were at hand. The truth is, we are in the throes of an educational revolution ; we are emerging from chaos rather than about to plunge into it ; we are beginning to recognise that education is the applied science of life, and that we really have existing material in the philosophy of the ages and the science of the day to formulate an educational code whereby we may order the lives of our children and regulate our own. We need not aspire to a complete and exhaustive code of educational laws. This will come to us duly when humanity has, so to speak, fulfilled itself. Meantime, we have enough to go on with if we would believe it. What we have to do is to gather together and order our resources ; to put the first thing foremost and all things in sequence, and to see that education is neither more nor less than the practical application of our philosophy. Hence, if our educational thought is to be sound and effectual, we must look to the philosophy which underlies it, and must be in a condition to trace every counsel of perfection for the bringing up of children to one or other of the two schools of philosophy of which it must needs be the outcome.

Is our system of education to be the issue of naturalism or of idealism, or is there indeed a *media via*? This is practically the question which

M. Fouillée sets himself to answer in the spirit of a philosophical educationalist. He examines his premisses and draws his deductions with a candour, culture, and philosophic insight which carry the confidence of the reader. No doubt he is of a mind with that umpire in a cricket-match who lays down the dictum that one must be quite fair to both sides with a *little* leaning to one's own. M. Fouillée takes sides with classical as opposed to scientific culture. But he is not a mere partisan; he has philosophic reasons for the faith that is in him, and his examination of the question of national education is full of instruction and inspiration for the thoughtful parent as well as for the schoolmaster.

M. Fouillée gives in his preamble a key to his treatment of the subject. He says :

“On this as on all great questions of practical philosophy Guyau has left his mark. . . . He has treated the question from the highest standpoint, and has treated it in a strictly scientific form. ‘Given the hereditary merits and faults of a race, how far can we modify existing heredity by means of education for a new heredity?’ For the problem is nothing less than this. It is not merely a matter of the instruction of individuals, but of the preservation and improvement of the race. Education must therefore be based upon the physiological and moral laws of the culture of races. . . . The ethnical is the true point of view. By means of education we must create such hereditary tendencies as will be useful to the race both physically and intellectually.”

M. Fouillée begins at the beginning. He examines the principle of selection, and shows that it is a working principle, not only in animal, but in intellectual, æsthetic, and moral life. He demonstrates



that there is what may be called psychological selection, according to whose laws those *ideas* which are the fittest rule the world; and it is in the light of this truth, of the natural selection of ideas and of their enormous force, that he would examine into the vexed question of the subjects and methods of education. M. Fouillée complains with justice that no attempt has been made to harmonise or unify education as a whole in any one civilised nation. Controversy rages round quite secondary questions—whether education shall be literary or scientific? and, again, whether the ancient or the modern languages shall be taught? But science and literature do not exhaust the field. Our author introduces a new candidate. He says:

“In this volume we shall inquire if the link between science and literature is not to be found in the knowledge of man, of society, of the great laws of the universe—*i.e.*, in morals and social science and æsthetics, in a word, in philosophy.”

Now this is the gist of the teaching which we have laboured to advance in the *Parents' Union* and its various agencies.

“The proper study of mankind is man,” is one of those “thoughts beyond their thought” which poets light upon; and I am able to add my personal testimony to the fact that under no other study with which I am acquainted is it possible to trace such almost visible expansion of mind and soul in the young student as in this of philosophy.

A peculiarly interesting and original line of thought, worked out very fully in this volume, is, that just as the child with an individual bent should have that bent encouraged and “educated,” so of a nation:—

“If social science rejects every mystical interpreta-

tion of the common spirit animating a nation, it by no means rejects the reflected consciousness or spontaneous divination, possessed by every nation, of the functions which have devolved upon it."

Here is a most fruitful suggestion. Think of the fitness of a scheme of physical, intellectual, and moral training, based upon our ideal of the English character and of the destiny of the English nation.

The chapter on "*Power of Education and of Idea-Forces—Suggestions—Heredity*" is very valuable, as utilising a floating nebulæ of intuitions, which are coming upon us in connection with the hundred and one hypnotic marvels of the day. M. Fouillée maintains that—

"The power of instruction and education, denied by some and exaggerated by others, being nothing but the power of ideas and sentiments, it is impossible to be too exact in determining at the outset the extent and limits of this force. This psychological problem is the foundation of pedagogy."

In a word, M. Fouillée returns boldly to the Platonic philosophy; the *idea* is to him all in all, in philosophy and education. But he returns empty-handed. The wave of naturalism, now perhaps on the ebb, has left neither flotsam nor jetsam for him, save for stranded fragments of the Darwinian theory. Now, we maintain that to this wave of thought, naturalistic, materialistic—what you will—we owe the discovery of the physiological basis of education.

While we believed that thought was purely volatile, incapable of impact upon matter, or of being acted upon by matter, our theories of education were necessarily vague. We could not catch our Ariel; how then could we school him? But now, the physiologists have taught us that our wilful sprite rests with

the tips of his toes, at any rate, upon solid ground ; nay more, his foothold is none so slight but that it leaves footmarks behind, an impress on that domain of the physical in which we are somewhat at home. The impalpable thoughts that we think leave their mark upon the quite palpable substance of the brain, set up, so the physiologists tell us, connections between the nerve-cells of which that organ is composed ; in fact, to make a long story short, the cerebrum "grows to the uses it is earliest and most constantly put to." This fact opens up a function of education upon which M. Fouillée hardly touches, that most important function of the formation of habits—physical, intellectual, moral. "Sow an act, reap a habit ; sow a habit, reap a character ; sow a character, reap a destiny," says Thackeray. And a great function of the educator is to secure that acts shall be so regularly, purposefully, and methodically sown that the child shall reap the habits of the good life in thinking and doing, with the minimum of conscious effort.

We are only now beginning to discover how beneficial are the laws which govern our being. Educate the child in these habits and the man's life will run in them, without the constant wear and tear of the moral effort of decision. Once, twice, three times in a day, he will still, no doubt, have to choose between the highest and the less high, the best and the less good course. But all the minor moralities of life may be made habitual to him. He has been brought up to be courteous, prompt, punctual, neat, considerate ; and he practises these virtues without conscious effort. It is much easier to behave in the way he is used to, than to originate a new line of conduct. And this is so, because it is graciously

and mercifully ordered that there shall be a physical record and adaptation as the result of our educational efforts; and that the enormous strain of moral endeavour shall come upon us only occasionally. "Sow a habit, reap a character;" that is, the formation of habits is the chief means whereby we modify the original hereditary disposition of the child until it becomes the character of the man.

But even in this physiological work, the spiritual force of the idea has its part to play. For a habit is set up by following out an initial idea with a long sequence of corresponding acts. You tell a child that the Great Duke slept in so narrow a bed that he could not turn over, because, said he, "When you want to turn over it's time to get up." The boy does not wish to get up in the morning; but he does wish to be like the hero of Waterloo. You stimulate him to act upon this idea day after day for a month or so, until the habit is formed, and it is just as easy as not to get up in good time.

The functions of education may be roughly defined as twofold; (*a*) the formation of habits; (*b*) the presentation of ideas. The first depends far more largely than we recognise on physiological processes. The second is purely spiritual in origin, method, and result. Is it not possible that here we have the meeting-point of the two philosophies which have divided mankind since men began to think about their thoughts and ways? Both are right; both are necessary; both have their full activity in the development of a human being at his best. The *crux* of modern thought, as indeed of all profound thought, is, Is it conceivable that the spiritual should have any manner of impact upon the material? Every problem, from the education of a little child to the



Divine Incarnation, turns upon this point. Conceive this possibility and all is plain, from the marvels resulting from hypnotic suggestion to the miracles of our faith. We can even believe what we are told, that, by an effort of passionate concentration of thought and feeling the devout may arrive at the figure of the stigmata upon hands and feet. With this key nothing is impossible to our faith, all we ask for is precedent. And after all, this inter-action of forces is the most common and every-day of our experiences. What is it but the impact of spirit upon matter which writes upon the face of flesh that record of character and conduct which we call countenance. And not only upon the face. He is a dull scholar in the lore of human nature, who cannot read a man fairly well from a back view. The sculptor knows the trick of it. There is a statue of the late Prince Consort in Edinburgh in which representative groups pay homage to the Prince. Stand so as to get the back view of any one of them and the shoulders of scholar, soldier, peasant, artisan, tell unmistakably the tale of their several lives. What is this but the impress of spirit upon matter !

Anyway we are on the horns of a dilemma. There is no middle course open to us. The physiologists have made it absolutely plain that the brain is concerned with thinking. Nay more, that thought may go on without any volition on the part of the thinker. Further, that much of our best work in art and literature is the result of what is called unconscious cerebration. Now, we must admit one of two things. Either thought is a process of the material brain, one more "mode of motion," as the materialists contend, or the material brain is the agent of the spiritual thought, which acts upon it, let us say, as the fingers



of a player upon the keys of his instrument. Grant this and the whole question is conceded. The impact of the spiritual upon the material is an accepted fact.

As we have had occasion to say before, in this great work of education parents and teachers are permitted to play only a subordinate part after all. You may bring your horse to the water, but you can't make him drink ; and you may present ideas of the fittest to the mind of the child ; but you do not know in the least which he will take, and which he will reject. And very well for us it is that this safeguard to his individuality is implanted in every child's breast. Our part is to see that his educational *plat* is constantly replenished with fit and inspiring ideas, and then we must needs leave it to the child's own appetite to take which he will have, and as much as he requires. Of one thing we must beware. The least symptom of satiety, especially when the ideas we present are moral and religious, should be taken as a serious warning. Persistence on our part just then may end in the child's never willingly sitting down to that dish any more.

The very limitations we see to our own powers in this matter of presenting ideas should make us the more anxiously careful as to the nature of the ideas set before our children. We shall not be content that they learn geography, history, Latin, what not,—we shall ask what salient ideas are presented in each such study, and how will these ideas affect the intellectual and moral development of the child. We shall be in a mood, that is, to go calmly and earnestly into the question of education as presented by M. Fouillée. We shall probably differ from him in many matters of detail, but we shall most likely be inclined to agree

with his conclusion that, not some subject of mere utility, but moral and social science conveyed by means of history, literature, or otherwise, is the one subject which we are not at liberty to leave out from the curriculum of "a being breathing thoughtful breath."

The tables of studies given in the appendix are of extreme value. Every subject is treated from what may be called the ideal point of view.

"Two things are necessary. First, we must introduce into the study of each science the philosophic spirit and method, general views, the search for the most general principles and conclusions. We must then reduce the different sciences to unity by a sound training in philosophy, which will be as obligatory to students in science as to students in literature. . . . Scientific truths, said Descartes, are battles won; describe to the young the principal and most heroic of these battles; you will thus interest them in the results of science, and you will develop in them a scientific spirit by means of the enthusiasm for the conquest of truth; you will make them see the power of the reasoning which has led to discoveries in the past, and which will do so again in the future. How interesting arithmetic and geometry might be if we gave a short history of their principal theorems; if the child were mentally present at the labours of a Pythagoras, a Plato, a Euclid, or in modern times of a Viète, a Descartes, a Pascal, or a Leibnitz. Great theories, instead of being lifeless and anonymous abstractions, would become human, living truths, each with its own history, like a statue by Michael Angelo, or like a painting by Raphael."

## CHAPTER XIII

### FAITH AND DUTY

#### III

THERE is a little involuntary resistance in our minds to any teaching which shall draw the deep things of our faith within the sphere of the laws which govern our development as human beings. We prefer that the commerce between God and the soul, in which is our life, should be altogether "supernatural," apart from the common laws of life, arbitrary, inexplicable, opposed to reason. If we err in this, it is in reverence we err. Our thought may be poor and crude, but all our desire is to hallow the Divine Name, and we know no other way in which to set it apart. But though we err in reverence, we *do* err, and, in the spiritual, as in the natural world, the motive does not atone for the act. We lose through this misconception of our relations with God the sense of unity in our lives. We become aware of an altogether unnatural and irreligious classification into things sacred and things secular. We are not in all things *at one* with God. There are beautiful lives in which there is no trace of this separation, whose aims are confined to the things we call sacred. But many thoughtful earnest persons feel sorely the need of a conception of the divine relation which shall embrace the whole of human life, which shall make

art, science, politics, all those cares and thoughts of men which are not rebellious, sacred also, as being all engaged in the great evolution, the evolution of the Kingdom of God.

Our religious thought, as our educational thought, is, far more than we imagine, the outcome of our philosophy. And do not let us imagine that philosophy is not for the general run of men, but only for the few. On the contrary, there is no living soul who does not develop his own philosophy of life—that which he appropriates of the current thoughts of his time, modified by his own experiences.

It would be interesting to trace the effect upon religious thought of the two great schools of philosophy—the Idealistic and the Naturalistic ; but that is beyond our powers, and beyond our purpose here ; we must confine ourselves to what is immediately practical. The present day *crux* is, that naturalistic philosophy being in the ascendant, and the things of our religion being altogether idealistic, many noble natures are in revolt, feeling that they cannot honestly accept as truth that which is opposed to human reason. Others, to whom their religious faith is the first thing, but who are yet in touch with the thought and discovery of the day, affect an only half-honest compromise with themselves, and say that there are certain questions which they will not examine ; matters secular alone being open to searching scrutiny. Now, it is not, as we so often hear, that the times are out of joint, that Christianity is effete, that there is any inherent antagonism between the facts of natural and the facts of spiritual life. It is our own philosophy which needs to be adjusted. We have somehow managed to get life out of focus ; we have begun with false initial ideas, and have taken the logical

inferences from these for essential truth. We have not perceived that the concern of the reasoning powers is not with moral or spiritual truth, or even with what we call facts, but is simply with the *logical* inferences from any premisses whatever accepted by the mind.

In our examination of M. Fouillée's *Education from a National Standpoint*, we made some attempt to show that the two schemes of philosophy which have hitherto divided the world have done so because both are right, and neither is exclusively right. Matter and spirit, force and idea, work together in the evolution of character. The brain, somehow, makes material record of those ideas which inspire the life. But the brain does not originate those ideas. They are spiritual in their nature, and are spiritually conveyed, whether by means of the printed page, the glance of an eye, the touch of a hand, or in that holy mystery of the inbreathing of the Divine Spirit, of which we cannot tell whence it comes nor whither it goes. Once we recognise that all thoughts that breathe and words that burn are of their nature spiritual, and appeal to the spiritual within us—that, in fact, all intercourse of thought and feeling belongs to the realm of ideas, spiritually conveyed, the great mysteries of our religion cease to be hedged off from our common experiences. If the friend who sits beside us deals with us, spirit with spirit, by means of quick interchange of ideas, is it hard to believe that just so is the intercourse between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man? The more perfect the sympathy between human souls, the less the need for spoken words. How easy to go on from this to the thought of that most intimate and blissful of all intercourse, the converse between the devout soul and its God.



Nothing can be more obvious, real, natural, necessary, than that the Father of Spirits should graciously keep open such intimate access to, and converse with, the spirits of men.

“I would that one would grant me,  
O my Lord,  
To find Thee only.

•       •       •       •       •       •  
That Thou alone wouldst speak to me, and I to Thee,  
As a lover talking to his loved one,  
A friend at table with his friend,”\*

is ever the aspiration of the devout soul. This continuous aspiration towards closest communion is, spoken or unspoken, the prayer of faith. A vain and fond imagination, says the sceptic, begotten of the heart, as when Narcissus became enamoured of his reflected image! What have we to say in reply? Nothing. He who does not perceive that he loves in his brother not the material form, but the spiritual being of which this form is one expression, how can he understand that the Spirit of God should draw with irresistible drawings the spirit of man, which is indeed the whole man. For, after all, what is the body but the garment which the spirit shapes to its uses?

To accept the outward seeming, to ignore the spiritual reality, is the easier way. To say that prayer is flung, as a child flings his kite, into the air, only to come down again; to say that men are the creatures of circumstances, with no power to determine their own fate; that this belief and that are equal verities, and that the worship of Christ or of Buddha is a mere affair of climate and conditions; this easy tolerance commends itself to many minds in these days.

\* “The Imitation of Christ” (Rhythmic translation).

“And to what does this easy and sceptical life lead a man? . . . To what, we say, does this scepticism lead? It leads a man to shameful loneliness and selfishness, the more shameful because it is so good-humoured and conscienceless and serene. Conscience! What is conscience? Why accept remorse? What is public or private faith? Mythuses alike, enveloped in enormous tradition. If, seeing and acknowledging the lies of the world, Arthur, as see them you can with only too fatal a clearness, you submit to them without any protest further than a laugh; if, plunged yourself in easy sensuality, you allow the whole wretched world to go past groaning by you unmoved; if the fight for the truth is taking place, and all men of honour are on the ground armed on the one side or the other, and you alone are to lie on your balcony and smoke your pipe out of the noise and the danger, you had better have died, or never have been at all, than be such a sensual coward.”\*

Mr. Beeching's *Eleven Sermons on Faith* are in refreshing contrast with this sort of modern Saduceeism. In his view, faith is not mystic, supernatural, an exceptional development; it is the common basis of our dealings with each other. Credit, trust, confidence—the framework of society rests upon these. “I cannot trust you”—what worse thing can we say to one another? The law recognises every man's right to the confidence of his fellow-men, and will have a man accounted innocent until he is proved guilty. Our whole commercial and banking systems, what are they, but enormous systems of *credit*, and only one in a hundred, or one in a thousand, fails to sustain this credit. Family and social life rest upon credit of another sort; let us call it moral credit, and only one

\* *Pendennis*. Thackery.

in a hundred or one in a thousand forfeits the trust. If one here and there give occasion for jealousy, mistrust, suspicion, why, the exception proves the rule. In his dealings with men, man lives by credit; in his dealings with God, man lives by faith. Let us use the same word in both cases, and say that man is a spiritual being, and, in all his relations, Godward or manward, he lives by faith. How simple and easy a thing faith becomes! How especially easy to the children who trust everybody and offer a confiding hand to any guide. Could we only rid ourselves of the materialistic notion that spiritual things are not to be understood by us, and that to believe in God is altogether a different thing from to trust a friend, how easy we should find the questions which we allow to stagger our faith.

But the Kingdom of God is coming upon us with power. Let us only break down this foolish barrier of the flesh; let us perceive that our relations with each other are the relations of spirit with spirit, and that spoken and written words are no more than the outward and visible signs of ideas spiritually conveyed, and how inevitable, incessant, all-encompassing becomes the presence of God about us. Faith is, then, the simple trust of person in Person. We realise with fearful joy that He is about our path, and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways—not with the austere eye of a judge, but with the caressing, if critical, glance of a parent. How easy, then, to understand the never-ceasing, ever-inspiring intercourse of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of man—how, morning by morning, He awakeneth *our* ear, also; how His inspiration and instruction come in the direction, and in the degree, in which the man is capable of receiving them. It is no longer a puzzle to us that

the uninstructed savage shows sweet traits of pity and generosity, "for His God doth instruct him and doth teach him." We are not confounded when we hear of a righteous man who lifts up his face to Heaven, and says, "There is no God," because we know, He maketh His sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and that just that measure of moral light and leading which a man lays himself open to receive is freely given to him. He may shut his eyes and say, 'There is no sun,' but none the less is he warmed and fed and comforted by the light he denies. This is the faith in which we would bring up our children, this strong, passionate sense of the dear nearness of our God; found in this conviction, the controversies of the day will interest but not exercise us, for we are on the other side of all doubt once we know Him in whom we have believed.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. We advance in this lore of the soul only in proportion as we make it our study; and all of us who have the bringing up of children must needs be thankful for every word of help and insight which shall open our eyes to the realities which are spiritually discerned. In this view parents will be glad to read and ponder the Sermons before us. Profound thought is conveyed in language of very great simplicity and purity. The sermons are written from the standpoint of present day thought, are not at all emotional, nor even hortatory, but they are very strengthening and refreshing. You read, and go on your way rejoicing in a strong sense of the reality of things unseen. Perhaps this result is due to Mr. Beeching's presentation of the *naturalness* of faith.

"It is noticeable that while our Lord is always demanding Faith, He offers no definition of the

Faith He requires; so that there is a presumption that He meant by Faith just what men ordinarily mean by it. And the presumption is increased when it is remembered that Faith in our Lord began with being faith in human qualities before those qualities were seen to be divine. The faith of the Apostles increased under our Lord's careful training, both in depth and breadth; but between the first attraction that drew (say) Peter from his nets, and the last declaration of his worship upon the shores of Genesaret, there was no breach of continuity. Indeed, as if to assure us that the Apostle's human faith had not after the Resurrection 'changed to something else,' and become an indefinite theological virtue, we find the word used to express it which, of all the words which labour to express faith, is the one most deeply tinged with human feeling: 'Simon, son of Jonas, *lovest* thou Me more than these?' We must ask, therefore, what, as between man and man, is commonly meant by Faith, and then we can examine whether our explanation fits the several groups of passages in the Gospels."

The above extract from the very thoughtful and instructive Preface illustrates what we mean by the naturalness of faith, not that which comes of itself and by itself, but that which is acceptable, fit, and proper to our nature whenever and whencesoever it arrive. "For," as Mr. Beeching says, "as faith is itself no self-originated impulse, but the springing up of a man's heart in response to the encircling pressure of the 'Everlasting Arms,' so its reward is to feel more deeply and ever more deeply their divine support."

The eleven sermons are upon "The Object of Faith," "The Worship of Faith," "The Righteousness



of Faith," "The Food of Faith," "National Faith," "The Eye of Faith," "The Ear of Faith," "The Activity of Faith," "The Gentleness of Faith," "The Discipline of Faith," "Faith in Man."

In his examination of "The Object of Faith," Mr. Beeching asks: "What then is He like; what kind of countenance is it that shines out upon us from the Gospel pages? Let us turn to them and see." And we read the story of how Jesus, being moved with compassion, touched the eyes of the two blind men by the wayside going out from Jericho. How Christ had compassion on other things besides bodily sickness. "Christ has compassion also on ignorance; on the aimless wandering of men after their own desires, without a<sup>\*</sup> Master to follow; on the weariness of spirit that such a life brings about." Again, "Christ has compassion not only on sickness and ignorance, but on sin—on the sinner who repents." And we read the story of the woman whose sins, which were many, were forgiven, for she loved much. Again, we see the countenance of Christ as it is turned upon that young man, of whom it is said, "Then Jesus, looking upon him, loved him." "Compassion, then, for suffering and ignorance, and sin that repents, love for enthusiasm, this we have seen in the face of Christ." One more divine regard we are invited to contemplate; how the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. "Can you imagine with what a face our Lord looked upon Peter, who had thrice denied Him, after confidently affirming that he would go with Him to death? Would that that face would shine upon us with whatever reproach when we in word or deed deny Him, that so we too may remember and weep." How the heart rises to such teaching as this—the simple presentation of Christ as He walked among

men. Well did our Lord say: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." The pity of it is that He, the altogether lovely, is so seldom lifted up to our adoring gaze. Perhaps, when our teachers invite us to behold the face of Christ, we shall learn the full interpretation of that profound word. He will draw all men, because it is not possible for any human soul to resist the divine loveliness once it is fairly and fully presented to his vision.

The sermon on the "Worship of Faith," sets forth that "to worship Christ is to bow down with love and wonder and thankfulness, before the most perfect goodness that the world has ever seen, and to believe that that goodness was the express image of God the Father." All aims and all ideals, that are not the aims and ideals of Christ, are distinctly opposed to such worship, and the man who entertains these alien ideals may not call himself a Christian. After examining that attitude of the spirit towards Christ which belongs to the worship of faith, the rest of the sermon is very practical. "Work is Worship," is the keynote: one longs that a writer who knows so well how to touch the secret springs had taken this opportunity to move us to that "heart's adoration," which is dearer to God; but, indeed, the whole volume has this tendency. It is well to be reminded that "the thorough and willing performance of any duty, however humble or however exalted, is like the offering of incense to Christ, well-pleasing and acceptable."

The sermon on the "Righteousness of Faith," is extremely important and instructive. The writer dwells on the "deplorable cant" with which we pronounce ourselves "miserable sinners," combining the "sentiments of the Pharisees in the parable with the expressions of the publican."

“Christ’s language about man’s sinfulness is altogether free from vagueness and hyperbole; when He blames He blames for definite faults which we can appreciate, and He is so far from declaring that men can do no good thing, that He assumes always that man in his proper state of dependence upon God has the power to do righteousness. ‘Whosoever shall do the will of My Father, which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.’ . . . But the question remains, How, considering our actual shortcomings, can any of us be spoken of by Christ as righteous here and now? This is the question in answer to which St. Paul wrote two of his greatest Epistles. His answer was, that according to Christ, a man is accounted righteous, not from a consideration of his works, but from a consideration of his faith in God. Human righteousness is not a verdict upon the summing up of a life, but it is reckoned to a man at any moment from a certain disposition of his spirit to the Spirit of God; a disposition of trust, love, reverence, the disposition of a dutiful son to a good father. . . . Righteousness, in the only sense in which it is possible for men, means believing and trusting God.”

We have not space to take up in detail all the teaching of this inspiring little volume. We commend it to parents. Who, as they, have need to nourish the spiritual life in themselves? Who, as they, have need to examine themselves as to with how firm a grasp they hold the mysteries of our faith? Who, as they, need to have their ideas as to the supreme relationship so clear that they can be translated into baby speech? Besides, we have seen that it is the duty of the educator to put the first thing foremost, and all things in sequence; only one thing is needful—that

we "have faith in God"; let us deliver our thoughts from vagueness and our ways from variableness, if we would help the children towards this higher life. To this end, we gladly welcome teaching which is rather nourishing than stimulating, and which should afford real help towards "sober walking in pure Gospel ways."

## CHAPTER XIV

### *THE HEROIC IMPULSE\**

“To set forth, as only art can, the beauty and the joy of living, the beauty and the blessedness of death, the glory of battle and adventure, the nobility of devotion—to a cause, an ideal, a passion even—the dignity of resistance, the sacred quality of patriotism, that is my ambition here,” says the editor of “*Lyra Heroica*” in his preface. We all feel that some such expression of the “simpler sentiments, more elemental emotions” should be freely used in the education of children, that, in fact, heroic poetry contains such inspiration to noble living as is hardly to be found elsewhere; and also we are aware that it is only in the youth of peoples that these elemental emotions find free expression in song. We look at our own ballad literature and find plenty of the right material, but it is too occasional and too little connected, and so though we would prefer that the children should imbibe patriotism and heroism at the one fountain head, we think it cannot be done. We have no truly English material, we say, for education in this kind, and we fall back on the Homeric myths in one or other of the graceful and spirited renderings which have been made specially for children.

\* “History of Early English Literature,” by Stopford A. Brooke, 2 vols. Macmillan & Co.



But what if it should turn out that we have our own Homer, our own Ulysses? Mr. Stopford Brooke has made a great discovery for us who look at all things from the child standpoint. Possibly he would not be gratified to know that his "History of Early English Literature," invaluable addition as it is to the library of the student and the man of letters, should be appropriated as food for babes. All the same, here is what we have long wanted. The elemental emotions and heroic adventures of the early English put into verse and tale, strange and eerie as the wildest fairy tale, yet breathing in every line the English temper and the English virtue that go to the making of heroes. Not that Beowulf, the hero of the great poem, was precisely English, but where the English came from, there dwelt he, and Beowulf was early adopted as the national hero, whose achievements were sung in every hall.

The poem, says Mr. Stopford Brooke, consisting of three thousand one hundred and eighty-three lines, is divided into two parts by an interval of fifty years; the first, containing Beowulf's great deeds against the monster Grendel and his dam; the second, Beowulf's conquest of the Fire-drake and his death and burial. We are told that we may fairly claim the poem as English, that it is in our tongue and in our country alone that it is preserved. The hero Beowulf comes of brave and noble parents, and mildness and more than mortal daring meet in him. When he comes to Hrothgar to conquer Grendel it is of his counsel as much as of his strength that we hear. The queen begs him to be friendly in council to her sons Hrothgar says to him, "Thou holdest thy faith with patience and thy might with prudence of mind. Thou shalt be a comfort to thy people and a help

to heroes." None, it is said, could order matters more wisely than he. When he is dying he looks back on his life, and that which he thinks of the most is not his great war deeds, but his patience, his prudence, his power of holding his own well and of avoiding new enmities. "Each of us must await the close of life," says he; "let him who can, gain honour before he die. That is best for a warrior when he is dead. But do thou throughout this day have patience of thy woes; I look for that from thee." Such the philosophy of this hero, legendary or otherwise, of some early century after Christ, before His religion had found its way among those northern tribes. Gentle, like Nelson, he had Nelson's iron resolution. What he undertook to do he went through without a thought, save of getting to the end of it. Fear is wholly unknown to him, and he seems, like Nelson, to have inspired his captains with his own courage. "I swore no false oaths," he said when dying; so also he kept his honour in faithfulness to his lord. On foot, alone, in front, while life lasted, he was his king's defence. He kept it in equal faithfulness when his lord was dead, and that to his own loss, for when the kingdom was offered to him he refused, and trained Heardreg, the king's son, to war and learning, guarded him kindly with honour, and avenged him when he was slain. He kept it in generosity, for he gave away all the gifts that he received; in courtesy, for he gave even to those who had been rude to him; and he is always gentle and grave with women. Above all, he kept it in war, for these things are said of him, "so shall a man do when he thinks to gain praise that shall never end, and cares not for his life in battle." "Let us have fame or death," he cries, and when Wiglaf comes to help him

against the dragon, and Beowulf is wrapped in the flame, Wiglaf recalls to him the aim of his whole life :—

“Beowulf, beloved, bear thyself well. Thou wert wont to say in youth that thou wouldst never let honour go. Now, strong in deeds, ward thy life, firm-souled prince, with all thy might, I will be thy helper.” “These,” adds Mr. Stopford Brooke, “are the qualities of the man and the hero, and I have thought it worth while to dwell on them, because they represent the ancient English ideal, the manhood which pleased the English folk even before they came to Britain, and because in all our histories since Beowulf’s time, for twelve hundred years or so, they have been repeated in the lives of the English warriors by land and sea whom we chiefly honour. But it is not only the idea of a hero which we have in Beowulf, it is also the idea of a king, the just governor, the wise politician, the builder of peace, the defender of his own folk at the price of his life, ‘the good king, the folk king, the beloved king, the war ward of his land, the winner of treasure for the need of his people, the hero who thinks in death of those who sail the sea, the gentle and terrible warrior, who is buried amid the tears of his people.’”

We owe Mr. Stopford Brooke earnest gratitude for bringing this heroic ideal of the youth of our nation within reach of the unlearned. But what have we been about to let a thousand years and more go by without ever drawing on the inspiration of this noble ideal in giving impulse to our children’s lives. We have many English heroes, it may be objected : we have no need of this resuscitated great one from a long buried past. We have indeed heroes galore to be proud of, but somehow they have not often been put

into song in such wise as to reach the hearts of the children and the unlearned. We have to thank Tennyson for our Arthur, and Shakespeare for our Henry the Fifth, but we imagine that parents will find their children's souls more in touch with Beowulf than with either of these, because, no doubt, the legends of a nation's youth are the pages of history which most easily reach a child, and Beowulf belongs to a younger stage of civilisation than even Arthur. We hope the author of "Early English Literature" will sometime give us the whole of the poem translated with a special view to children, and interspersed with his own luminous teaching as we have it here. The quaintness of the metre employed gives a feeling of *eld* which carries the reader back, very successfully, to the long ago of the poem.

We have already quoted largely from this "History of Early English Literature," but perhaps a fuller extract will give a better idea of the work and of its real helpfulness to parents. The cost of the two rather expensive volumes should be well repaid if a single child were to be fired with emulation of the heroic qualities therein sung:—

"The action of the poem now begins with the voyage of Beowulf to the Danish coast. The hero has heard that Hrothgar, the chief of the Danes, is tormented by Grendel, a man-devouring monster. If Hrothgar's warriors sleep in Heorot—the great hall he has built—they are seized, torn to pieces, and devoured. 'I will deliver the king,' thought Beowulf, when he heard the tale from the roving seamen. 'Over the swan road I will seek Hrothgar; he has need of men.' His comrades urged him to the adventure, and fifteen of them were willing to fight it out with him. Among the rest was a sea-crafty man who

knew the ocean-paths. Their ship lay drawn up on the beach, under the high cliff. Then—

“There the well-gear'd heroes  
 Stepped upon the stem, while the stream of ocean  
 Whirled the sea against the sand. To the ship, to its breast.  
 Bright and carved things of cost carried then the heroes  
 And the armour well-arrayed. So the men outpushed,  
 On desired adventure, their tight ocean wood.  
 Swiftly went above the waves, with a wind well-fitted,  
 Likest to a fowl, the Floater, foam around its neck,  
 Till about the same time, on the second day,  
 The up-curved prow had come on so far,  
 That at last the seamen saw the land ahead ;  
 Shining sea-cliffs, soaring headlands,  
 Broad sea-nesses. So the Sailor of the Sea  
 Reached the sea-way's end.”

*Beowulf*, l. 211.

“This was the voyage, ending in a fiord with two high sea-capes at its entrance. The same kind of scenery belongs to the land whence they had set out. When Beowulf returns over the sea the boat groans as it is pushed forth. It is heavily laden ; the hollow, under the single mast with the single sail, holds eight horses, swords and treasure and rich armours. The sail is hoisted, the wind drives the foam-throated bark over the waves, until they see the Geats' Cliffs—the well-known sea-nesses. The keel is pressed up by the wind on the sand, and the ‘harbour-guard, who had looked forth afar o'er the sea with longing for their return’—one of the many human touches of the poem—‘fastens the wide-bosomed ship with anchoring chains to the strand, lest the violence of the waves should sweep away the winsome boat.’ . . . At the end of the bay into which Beowulf sails is a low shore, on which he drives his ship, stem on. Planks are pushed out on either side of the prow ; the Weder-folk slipped down



on the shore, tied up their sea-wood ; their battle sarks clanged on them as they moved. Then they thanked the gods that the war-paths had been easy to them. . . . On the ridge of the hill above the landing-place the ward of the coast of the Scyldings sat on his horse, and saw the strangers bear their bright shields over the bulwarks of the ship to the shore. He rode down, wondering, to the sea, and shook mightily in his hands his heavy spear, and called to the men—

“Who are ye of men, having arms in hand,  
Covered with your coats of mail. Who your keel afoaming  
O'er the ocean street thus have urged along.  
Hither on the high sea !”

. . . . .

“Never saw I greater  
Earl upon this earth than is one of you ;  
Hero in his harness. He is no home-stayer,  
'Less his looks belie him, lovely with his weapons.  
Noble is his air !”

*Beowulf*, ll. 237-247.

“Beowulf replies that he is Hrothgar's friend, and comes to free him from 'Grendel, the secret foe on the dark nights.' He pities Hrothgar, old and good. Yet, as he speaks, the Teutonic sense of the inevitable Wyrd passes by in his mind, and he knows not if Hrothgar can ever escape sorrow. 'If ever,' he says, sorrow should cease from him, release ever come, and the welter of care become cooler.' The coast-guard shows them the path, and promises to watch over their ship. The ground rises from the shore, and they pass on to the hilly ridge, behind which lies Heorot.”

“The History of the Early English Literature” takes us into other pleasant places. Here are two or three specimens of the riddles of the old bards, and in

riddle and saga we get most vivid pictures of the life and thoughts, the ways and words of the forefathers whom we are too ready to think of as 'rude,' but who are here portrayed to us as gentle, mild, and large of soul; men and women whom we, their posterity, may well delight to honour.

### I. Here is Cynewulf's Riddle of the Sword.

"I'm a wondrous wight for warstrife shapen;  
By my lord beloved, lovelily adorned:  
Many coloured is my corslet, and a clasping wire  
Glitters round the gem of death which my wielder gave to me:  
He who whiles doth urge me, wide-wanderer that I am,  
With him to conquest.

Then I carry treasure,  
Cold above the garths, through the glittering day;  
I of smiths the handiwork! Often do I quell  
Breathing men with battle edges! Me bedecks a king  
With his hoard and silver; honours me in hall,  
Doth withhold no word of praise! Of my ways he boasts  
'Fore the many heroes, where the mead they drink.  
In restraint he lulls me, then he lets me loose again,  
Far and wide to rush along; me the weary with wayfarings,  
Cursed of all weapons."

*Riddle xxi.*

### II. The helmet speaks:—

"Wretchedness I bear;  
Wheresoe'er he carries me, he who clasps the spear!  
On me, still upstanding, smite the streams (of rain);  
Hail, the hard grain (helms me), and the hoar-frost covers me;  
And the (flying) snow (in flakes) falls all over me."

*Riddle, lxxix. 6-10.*

### III. The horn speaks:—

"I a weaponed warrior was! now in pride bedecks me  
A young serving man all with silver and fine gold,  
With the work of waving gyres! Warriors sometimes kiss me.  
Sometimes I to strife of battle, summon with my calling  
Willing war-companions; whiles, the horse doth carry

Me the march-paths over, or the ocean-stallion  
Fares the flood with me, flashing in my jewels—  
Often times a bower maiden, all bedecked with armlets,  
Filleth up my bosom ; whiles, bereft of covers,  
I must, hard and headless, (in the houses) lie !  
Then, again, hang I, with adornments fretted,  
Winsome on the wall where the warriors drink.  
Sometimes the folk fighters, as a fair thing on warfaring,  
On the back of horses bear me ; then bedecked with jewels  
Shall I puff with wind from a warrior's breast.  
Then, again, to glee feasts I the guests invite  
Haughty heroes to the wine— other whiles shall I  
With my shouting, save from foes what is stolen away,  
Make the plundering scather flee. Ask what is my name !”

*Riddle xv.*

We do not say a word about the literary value and importance of Mr. Stopford Brooke's great work ; that is duly appraised elsewhere. 'There is nothing like leather,' and to us here all things present themselves as they may tell on education. Here is a very treasure-trove.

## CHAPTER XV

### *IS IT POSSIBLE?*

THE economic aspects of the great philanthropic scheme\* which brought timely relief to the national conscience before the setting in of the hard winter of 1891, are, perhaps, outside our province, but there are educational aspects of it which, we are in some measure, bound to discuss. In the first place, the children in many homes hear, "I do not believe that"—it is possible for the leopard to change his spots. 'General' Booth's scheme brings this issue before us with startling directness, and what the children hear said to-day at the table and by the fireside will probably influence for all their lives their attitude towards all philanthropic and all missionary endeavour. Not only so, but we ourselves, who stand in some measure *in loco parentis* to the distressed in mind, body, or estate, are compelled to examine our own position. How far do we give, and work, for the ease of our own conscience, and how far do we believe in the possibility of the instant and utter restoration of the morally degraded, are questions which, to-day, force themselves upon us. We must be ready with a yea or a nay; we must take sides, for or against such possibilities as should exalt philanthropic effort into a burning passion. The fact is, this great scheme forced a sort of moral crisis upon us.

\* Issue of *Darkest England*.

Whether or no the scheme commends itself to us for its fitness, seasonableness, and promise, one thing it has assuredly done : it has revealed us to ourselves, and that in an agreeable light. It has been discovered to us that we, too, love our brother ; that we, too, yearn over "the bruised" with something of the tenderness of Christ. The brotherhood of man is no fancy bred in the brain, and we have loved our brother all the time—the sick, the poor, the captive, and the sinner, too ; but the fearful, and unbelieving, and slothful amongst us—that is, the most of us—have turned away our eyes from beholding evils for which we saw no help. But now that a promise of deliverance offers, more adequate, conceivably, than any heretofore proposed, why, the solidarity of humanity asserts itself ; our brother who is bruised is not merely near and dear ; he is our very self, and whoso will ease and revive him is our deliverer too.

The first flush of enthusiasm subsides, and we ask, Are we not, after all, led away by what Coleridge calls the "Idol of Size" ? Wherein does this scheme differ from ten thousand others, except in the colossal scale on which the experiment is to be tried ? And perhaps we should concede at the outset that this hope of deliverance is "the same, only more so," as is being already worked out effectually in many an otherwise sunless corner of the great vineyard. Indeed, the great project has its great risks—risks which the quieter work escapes. All the same, there are aspects in which the remedy, because of its vastness and inclusiveness, is new.

Hitherto we have helped the wretched *in* impossible circumstances, not *out of* them. Our help has been as a drop in the bucket, reaching to hundreds or thousands only of the lost millions. Even so, we



cannot keep it up ; we give to-day, and withhold to-morrow ; worse than all, our very giving is an injury, reducing the power and the inclination for self-help. Or, do we start some small amateur industry by way of making our people *independent* ? This pet industry may sometimes be a transparent mask for almsgiving, and an encroachment upon regular industries and the rights of other workers.

Now and then is a gleam of hope, now and then a soul and body snatched into safety ; but the hardest workers are glad of the noise of the wheels to keep the eternal *Cui bono ?* out of their ears. There is so much to be done, and so little means of doing it. But this scheme—what with the amplitude of its provisions, what with the organisation and regimentation it promises, the strong and righteous government, the moral compulsion to well-doing—considering these, and the enormous staff of workers already prepared to carry it out, the dreariest pessimist amongst us concedes that General Booth's scheme *may* be worth trying. "But," he says, "but——

#### DO WE BELIEVE IN CONVERSION ?"

Everything turns on the condition the originator wisely puts first. There is the *crux*. Given money enough, land enough, men enough, fully equip and officer this teeming horde of incapables, and some sort of mechanical drill may be got through somehow. But, "when a man's own character and defects constitute the reasons for his fall, that character must be changed and that conduct altered if any permanent beneficial results are to be obtained." The drunkard must be made sober ; the criminal, honest ; the impure, clean. Can this be done ? is the crucial question.

Is it possible that a man can emerge altogether out of his old self and become a new creature, with new aims, new thoughts, even new habits? That such renovation is possible is the old contention of Christianity. Here, and not on the ground of the inspiration of the sacred text, must the battle be fought out. The answer to the one urgent question of the age, What think ye of Christ? depends upon the power of the idea of Christ to attract and compel attention, and of the indwelling of Christ to vivify and elevate a single debased and torpid human soul.

Many of us believe exultingly that the "All power" which is given into the hands of our Master includes the power of upright standing, strength, and beauty for every bruised human reed. That this is so, we have evidence in plenty, beginning with ourselves. But many others of us, and those not the less noble, consider with Robert Elsmere, that "miracles do not happen." The recorded miracles serve as pegs for the discussion; the essential miracle is the utter and immediate renovation of a human being. Upon this possibility the saving of the world must hang, and this many cannot receive, not because they are stiff-necked and perverse, but because it is dead against natural law as they know it. Proofs? Cases without end? The whole history of the Christian Church in evidence? Yes; but the history of the Church is a chequered one; and, for individual cases, we do not doubt the veracity of the details; only, nobody knows the whole truth; some preparation in the past, some motive in the present inadvertently kept out of sight, may alter the bearings of any such case.

This is, roughly, the position of the honest sceptic, who would, if he could, believe heartily in General Booth's scheme, and, by consequence, in the converti-

bility of the entire human race. To improve the circumstances, even of millions, is only a question of the magnitude of the measures taken, the wisdom of the administration. But human nature itself, depraved human nature, is, to him, the impossible quantity. *Can the leopard change his spots?*

#### THE LAW AGAINST US—HEREDITY.

Who are they whom General Booth cheerfully undertakes to re-fashion and make amenable to the conditions of godly and righteous and sober living? Let us hear the life history of many of them in his own words:—

“The rakings of the human cesspool.”

“Little ones, whose parents are habitually drunk. . . . Whose ideas of merriment are gained from the familiar spectacle of the nightly debauch.”

“The obscenity of the talk of many of the children of some of our public schools could hardly be out-done, even in Sodom and Gomorrah.”

And the childhood—save the word!—of the children of to-day reproduces the childhood of their parents, their grand-parents, who knows? their great-grand-parents. These are, no doubt, the worst; but the worst must be reckoned with first, for if these slip through the meshes of the remedial net, the masses more inert than vicious slide out through the breaks. In the first place, then, the scheme embraces the vicious by inheritance; proposes to mix up with the rest a class whose sole heritage is an inconceivable and incalculable accumulation of vicious inclinations and propensities. And this, in the face of that conception of heredity which is quietly taking possession of the public mind, and causing many thoughtful

parents to abstain from very active efforts to mould the characters of their children.

Those of us whose attention has been fixed upon the working of the law of heredity until it appears to us to run its course, unmodified and unlimited by other laws, may well be pardoned for regarding with doubtful eye a scheme which has, for its very first condition, the regeneration of the vicious; of the vicious by inherited propensity.

#### THE LAW AGAINST US—HABIT.

Use is second nature, we say. Habit is ten natures; habit begins as a cobweb, and ends as a cable. "Oh, you'll get used to it," whatever it is. Dare we face the habits in which these people have their being? It is not only the obscene speech, the unholy acts; that which signifies is the manner of thoughts we think; speech, act, are the mere outcome; it is the habitual thought of a man which shapes that which we call his character. And these, can we reasonably doubt that every imagination of their heart is only evil continually? We say, use is second nature, but let us consider what we mean by the phrase; what is the philosophy of habit so far as it has been discovered to us. The seat of habit is the brain; the actual grey nervous matter of the cerebrum. And the history of a habit is shortly this: "The cerebrum of man grows to those modes of thought in which it is habitually exercised." That 'immaterial' thought should mould the 'material' brain need not surprise nor scandalise us, for do we not see with our eyes that immaterial thought moulds the face, forms what we call countenance, lovely or loathsome according to the manner of thought it registers. The *how* of

this brain growth is not yet in evidence, nor is this the time and place to discuss it; but, bearing in mind this structural adaptation to confirmed habit, what chance, again, we say, has a scheme which has for its first condition the regeneration of the vicious, vicious not only by inherited propensity, but by unbroken inveterate habit?

#### THE LAW AGAINST US—UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION.

Those who are accustomed to write know what it is to sit down and “reel off” sheet after sheet of matter without plan or premeditation, clear, coherent, ready for press, hardly needing revision. We are told of a lawyer who wrote in his sleep a lucid opinion throwing light on a most difficult case; of a mathematician who worked out in his sleep a computation which baffled him when awake. We know that Coleridge dreamed “Kubla Khan” in an after-dinner nap, line by line, and wrote it down when he awoke. What do these cases and a thousand like them point to? To no less than this: that, though the all important *ego* must, no doubt, “assist” at the thinking of the initial thought on a given subject, yet, after that first thought or two, ‘brain’ and ‘mind’ manage the matter between them, and the thoughts, so to speak, think themselves; not after the fashion of a pendulum which moves to and fro, to and fro, in the same interval of space, but in that of a carriage rolling along the same road, but into ever new developments of the landscape. An amazing thought—but have we not abundant internal evidence of the fact? We all know that there are times when we cannot get rid of the thoughts that *will think themselves* within us, though they drive away sleep and peace and joy. In



the face of this law, benign as it eases us of the labour of original thought and decision about the everyday affairs of life, terrible when it gets beyond our power of control and diversion, what hope for those in whose debauched brain vile thoughts, involuntary, automatic, are for ever running with frightful rapidity in the one well-worn track? Truly, the *in*-look is appalling. What hope for these? And what of a scheme whose first condition is the regeneration of the vicious—vicious, not only by inherited propensity, and by unbroken inveterate habit, but reduced to that state of, shall we say, inevitable viciousness—when “unconscious cerebration,” with untiring activity, goes to the emanation of vicious imaginations? All these things are against us.

THE LAW FOR US—LIMITATIONS TO THE DOCTRINE  
OF HEREDITY.

But the last word of Science, and she has more and better words in store, is full of hope. The fathers have eaten sour grapes, but it is not inevitable that the children's teeth be set on edge. The soul that sinneth *it* shall die, said the prophet of old, and Science is hurrying up with her, “Even so.” The necessary corollary to the latest modification of the theory of evolution is—*acquired modifications of structure are not transmitted*. All hail to the good news; to realise it, is like waking up from a hideous nightmare. This is, definitely, our gain; the man who by the continuous thinking of criminal thoughts has modified the structure of his brain so as to adapt it to the current of such thoughts, does not necessarily pass on this modification to his child. There is no necessary adaptation in the cerebrum of the new-born

child to make place for evil thoughts. In a word, the child of the vicious may be born as fit and able for good living as the child of the righteous. Inherent modifications are, it is true, transmitted, and the line between inherent and acquired modifications may not be easy to define. But, anyway, there is hope to go on with. The child of the wicked may have as good a start in life, so far as his birthright goes, as the child of the just. The child's future depends not upon his lineage so much as upon his bringing up, for education is stronger than nature, and no human being need be given over to despair. We need not abate our hope of the regeneration of the vicious for the bugbear of an inheritance of irresistible propensity to evil.

THE LAW FOR US—"ONE CUSTOM OVERCOMETH  
ANOTHER."

But habit! It is bad enough to know that use is second nature, and that man is a bundle of habits; but how much more hopeless to look into the *rationale* of habit, and perceive that the enormous strength of the habit that binds us connotes a structural modification, a shaping of the brain tissues to the thought of which the habit is the outward and visible sign and expression. Once such growth has taken place, is not the thing done, so that it can't be undone—has not the man taken shape for life when his ways of thinking are registered in the substance of his brain?

Not so; because one habit has been formed and registered in the brain is no reason at all why another and contrary habit should not be formed and registered in its turn. To-day is the day of salvation, physically speaking, because a habit is a thing of *now*; it may be begun in a moment, formed in a month, confirmed in

three months, become the character, the very man, in a year. There is growth to the new thoughts in a new tract of the brain, and "One custom overcometh another." Here is the *natural* preparation for salvation. The words are very old, the words of Thomas à Kempis, but the perception that they have a literal physical meaning has been reserved for us to-day. Only one train of ideas can be active at one time; the old cell connections are broken, and benign nature is busy building up the waste places, even be they the waste places of many generations. NO ROAD is set up in the track where the unholy thoughts carried on their busy traffic. New tissue is formed; the wound is healed, and, save, perhaps, for a scar, some little tenderness, that place is whole and sound as the rest.

This is how one custom overcometh another: there is no conflict, no contention, no persuasion. Secure for the new idea a weighty introduction, and it will accomplish all the rest for itself. It will feed and grow; it will increase and multiply; it will run its course of its own accord; will issue in that current of automatic unconscious involuntary thought of the man which shapes his character. Behold, a new man! Ye must be born again, we are told; and we say, with a sense of superior knowledge of the laws of nature, How can a man be born again? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? This would be a miracle, and we have satisfied ourselves that "miracles do not happen." And now, at last, the miracle of conversion is made plain to our dull understanding. We perceive that conversion, however sudden, is no miracle at all—using the word *miracle* to describe that which takes place in opposition to natural

law. On the contrary, we find that every man carries in his physical substance the gospel of perpetual, or of always possible, renovation; and we find how, from the beginning, Nature was prepared with her response to the demand of Grace. Is conversion possible? we ask; and the answer is, that it is, so to speak, a function for which there is latent provision in our physical constitution, to be called forth by the touch of a potent idea. Truly, His commandment is exceeding broad, and grows broader day by day with each new revelation of Science.

A man may, most men do, undergo this process of renovation many times in their lives; whenever an idea strong enough to divert his thoughts (as we most correctly say) from all that went before is introduced, the man becomes a new creature; when he is "in love," for example; when the fascinations of art or of nature take hold of him; an access of responsibility may bring about a sudden and complete conversion:—

The breath no sooner left his father's body  
But that his wildness, mortified in him,  
Seem'd to die too; yea, at that very moment,  
Consideration, like an angel, came  
And whipp'd the offending Adam out of him;  
Leaving his body as a paradise  
To envelop and contain celestial spirits.

Here is a picture—psychologically true, anyway, Shakespeare makes no mistakes in psychology—of an immediate absolute conversion. The conversion may be to the worse, alas, and not to the better, and the value of the conversion must depend upon the intrinsic worthiness of the idea by whose instrumentality it is brought about. The point worth

securing is, that man carries in his physical structure the conditions of renovation; conditions, so far as we can conceive, always in working order, always ready to be put in force. Wherefore "conversion" in the Biblical sense, in the sense in which the promoters of this scheme depend upon its efficacy, though a miracle of divine grace in so far as it is a sign and a marvel, is no miracle in the popular sense of that which is outside of and opposed to the workings of "natural law." Conversion is entirely within the divine scheme of things, even if we choose to limit our vision of that scheme to the "few, faint, and feeble" flashes which Science is as yet able to throw upon the mysteries of being. But is this all? Ah, no; this is no more than the dim vestibule of nature to the temple of grace; we are not concerned, however, to say one word here of how "great is the mystery of godliness;" of the cherishing of the Father, the saving and the indwelling of the Son, the sanctifying of the Spirit; neither need we speak of "spiritual wickedness in high places." The aim of this slight essay is to examine the assertion that what we call conversion is contrary to natural law; and we do this with a view, not to General Booth's scheme only, but to all efforts of help.

Hope shows an ever stronger case for the regeneration of the vicious. Not only need we be no more oppressed by the fear of an inheritance of invincible propensities to evil, but the strength of life-long habit may be vanquished by the power of an idea, new habits of thought may be set up on the instant, and these may be fostered and encouraged until that habit which is ten natures is the habit of the *new* life, and the thoughts which, so to



speaking, think themselves all day long are thoughts of purity and goodness.

THE LAW FOR US—POTENCY OF AN IDEA.

“Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?”

In effecting the renovation of a man the external agent is ever an *idea*, of such potency as to be seized upon with avidity by the mind, and, therefore, to make an impression upon the nervous substance of the cerebrum. The potency of an idea depends upon the fact of its being complementary to some desire or affection within the man. Man wants knowledge, for example, and power, and esteem, and love, and company; also, he has within him capacities for love, esteem, gratitude, reverence, kindness. He has an unrecognised craving for an object on which to spend the good that is in him.

The idea which makes a strong appeal to any one of his primal desires and affections must needs meet with a response. Such idea and such capacity are made for one another; apart, they are meaningless as ball and socket; together, they are a *joint*, effective in a thousand ways. But the man who is utterly depraved has no capacity for gratitude, for example? Yes, he has; depravity is a disease, a morbid condition; beneath is the man, capable of recovery. This is hardly the place to consider them, but think for a moment of the fitness of the ideas which are summed up in the thought of Christ to be presented to the poor degraded soul: divine aid and compassion for his neglected body; divine love for his loneliness; divine forgiveness in lieu of the shame of his sin; divine esteem for his

self-contempt; divine goodness and beauty to call forth the passion of love and loyalty that is in him; the Story of the Cross, the lifting up, which perhaps no human soul is able to resist if it be fitly put. And the divine idea once received, the divine life is imparted also, grows, is fostered and cherished by the Holy Ghost. The man is a new creature, with other aims, and other thoughts, and a life out of himself. The old things have passed away, and all things have become new—the physical being embodying, so to speak, the new life of the spirit.

We may well believe, indeed, that “conversion” is so proper to the physical and spiritual constitution of man that it is inevitable to all of us if only the ideas summed up in Christ be fitly introduced to the soul.

The question then turns, not upon the possibility of converting the most depraved, nor upon the potency of the ideas to be presented, but altogether upon the power of putting these ideas so that a man shall recognise and seize upon the fulness of Christ as the necessary complement to the emptiness of which he is aware.

#### THE HABITS OF THE GOOD LIFE.

But, the man converted, the work is not done. These sinners exceedingly are not only sinful, but diseased; morbid conditions of brain have been set up, and every one of them needs individual treatment, like any other sick man, for disease slow of cure. For a month, three months, six months, it will not do to let one of them alone. Curative *treatment* is an absolute condition of success, and here is where human co-operation is invited in what is primarily and ultimately the work of God. There are diseased

places in the brain, where ill thoughts have of old run their course; and these sore places must have time, blessed time, wherein to heal. That is to say, all traffic in the old thoughts must be absolutely stopped, at whatever cost.

Think of the Army of Vigilance which must be ever on the alert to turn away the eyes of the patients from beholding evil; for, a single suggestion, of drink, of uncleanness, and, *presto*, the old thoughts run riot, and the work of healing must be begun anew. And, how to keep out the old, but by administering the thoughts of the new life watchfully, one by one, as they are needed, and can be taken; offering them with engaging freshness, with comforting fitness, until at last the period of anxious nursing is over, the habits of the good life are set up, and the patient is able to stand on his own feet and labour for his own meat. This is no work to be undertaken wholesale. The spiritual care of a multitude diseased, even physically diseased, of sin, is no light thing. And if it be not undertaken systematically, and carried out efficiently, the whole scheme must of necessity fall through. Who is sufficient for these things? No one, perhaps; but a following of a great corps of nurses trained to minister to minds diseased, and with the experience and the method belonging to a professional calling, is surely, a fitting qualification for the Herculean task.

#### THE EASE OF DISCIPLINE.

How readily we can understand how, in the days when monarchs were more despotic than they are now, one and another would take refuge in a convent for the ease of doing the will of another rather than his

own! Is not this the attraction of conventual life to-day, and is not this why the idea of the Salvation Army is powerfully attractive to some of us who know, all the same, that we (individually) should be wrong to lay down our proper function of ordering and acting out our own lives. But for these, strong of impulse and weak of will, who have no power at all to do the good they vaguely and feebly desire, oh, the ease of being taken up into a strong and beneficent organisation, of having their comings and goings, their doings and havings, ordered for them! Organisation, regimentation, we are reminded, make a hero of Tommy Atkins. And these all have it in them to be heroes, because, restlessness, rebellion, once subdued, they will rejoice more than any others in the ease of simply doing as they are bidden. Here is a great secret of power, to treat these, lapsed and restored, like children; for what is the object of family discipline, of that obedience which has been described as "the whole duty of a child"? Is it not to ease the way of the child, while will is weak and conscience immature, by setting it on the habits of the good life where it is as easy to go right as for a locomotive to run on its lines? Just such present relief from responsibility, such an interval for development, do these poor children of larger growth demand for their needs; and any existing possibility of ordering and disciplining this mixed multitude must needs appear to us a surpassing adaptation of "supply" to "demand."

The saving grace of work, and the healing power of the fresh air, again, should do their part in the restoration of the "submerged." But it is not our part to examine the methods proposed by General Booth, or to adumbrate his chances of success. Our concern is solely with the children. No doubt this great social

scheme has been discussed, more or less, in every family, and the attitude of thought towards all good work which the children will henceforth take may depend very much upon how far the underlying principles are made clear to them in one such typical instance. Whatever the agency, let the children be assured that the work is the work of God, to be accomplished in the strength of God, according to the laws of God; that it is our part to make ourselves acquainted with the laws we would work out, and that, having done all, we wait for the inspiration of the divine life, even as the diligent farmer waits upon sunshine and shower.



## CHAPTER XVI

### DISCIPLINE

WHAT part does Discipline play in your system of education? We should hail the query as manifesting a cheering degree of interest if we were not quite sure that our interlocutor uses discipline as a euphuism for punishment. That conviction puts one's mind into the attitude of protest. In the first place, we have no system of education. We hold that great things, such as nature, life, education are "cabined, cribbed, confined" in proportion as they are systematised. We have a *method* of education, it is true, but method is no more than a way to an end and is free, yielding, adaptive as Nature herself. Method has a few comprehensive laws according to which details shape themselves, as one naturally shapes one's behaviour to the acknowledged law that fire burns. System, on the contrary, has an infinity of rules and instructions as to what you are to do and how you are to do it. Method in education follows Nature humbly, stands aside and gives her fair play.

System leads Nature : assists, supplements, rushes in to undertake those very tasks which Nature has made her own since the world was. Does Nature endow every young thing, child or kitten, with a wonderful capacity for inventive play? Nay, but, says System, I can help here; I will invent games for the child and help his plays, and make more use of this power of his

than unaided Nature knows how. So Dame System teaches the child to play, and he enjoys it; but, alas, there is no play in him, no initiative, when he is left to himself; and so on all along the lines. System is fussy and zealous and produces enormous results—in the teacher! Method pursues a “wise passiveness.” You watch the teacher and are hardly aware that he is doing anything. The children take the initiative, but, somehow, the result here is in these and not in the teacher. They develop, become daily more and more of persons, with

“The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill.”

Such as these are the golden fruits which ripen under the eyes of the parent who is wise to discriminate between the *rôle* of nature and that of the educator, who follows sympathetically and dutifully the lead of the great mother.

“Oh, then you have no discipline. I thought not. I daresay it would answer very well to leave children to themselves and make them happy. Children are always good when they are happy, are they not?” Not so fast, dear reader. He who would follow a great leader must needs endeavour himself, *Ohne Hast ohne Rast*, and the divine lead which we call Nature is infinitely blessed in the following, but steep to tread and hard to find and by no means to be confounded with leisurely strolling in ways of our own devising.

The parent who would educate his children, in any large sense of the word, must lay himself out for high thinking and lowly living; the highest thinking indeed possible to the human mind and the simplest, directest living.

This thought of discipline, for example, is one of the

large comprehensive ideas which must inform and direct the life, rather than be gathered up into a rule, easy to remember and easy to apply, when, now and then, comes the occasion for it. If Tommy is naughty, whip him and send him to bed—is a ready-reckoner kind of rule, handy to have about one, and is the sort of thing which many people mean by discipline. Now we would not say that punishment is never to be used, very much otherwise. Neither would we say that physic is never to be taken. But punishment, like physic, is a casualty only of occasional occurrence at the worst, and punishment and physic alike are reduced to a minimum in proportion as we secure healthy conditions of body and mind. We are not anxious to lay down canons for punishment. Mr. Herbert Spencer has not perhaps said the last word, but he has given us a quite convenient rule to go on with. A child should be punished by the natural consequences of his offence. To carry this suggestion out *au pied de la lettre* would often enough mean lasting, even fatal injury to the child, bodily and mental. You cannot let the indolent child be punished by ignorance, or the wilful and adventurous child break his limb; but, so far as punishments have been allowed to become necessary, the nature of the offence gives one a clue to a suitable punishment. The child who does not eat his porridge goes without his plum. This is, anyway, a punishment in kind, perhaps the nearest approach to natural consequences which it is advisable to try.

But parents should face the fact that children rather enjoy punishments. In these they find the opportunities, so frequent in story-books, so rare in real life, for showing a fine pluck. The child who is in punishment is very commonly enjoying himself immensely, because he is respecting himself intensely.

There is a bit of heroism in the bearing of the penalty which is very apt to do away with any sense of contrition for the offence, and the plucky little fellow, who takes his punishment with an air, is by no means a bad and hardened young offender, but is an economist of opportunities, making the best of what comes to hand for his own real education. His mother's distress, his father's disapproval, these are quite different matters, and carry no compensating sense of hardihood. Reflections like these lead one to spare the rod, not at all out of over sensibility to the child's physical suffering, for we would have him endure hardness if we mean to make a man of him, but purely because it is not easy to find a punishment that does not defeat its own end.

The light smart slap, with which the mother visits the little child when he is naughty, is often both effective and educative. It changes the current of baby's thoughts, and he no longer wishes to pull his sister's hair. But should not the slap be a last resort when no other way is left of changing his thoughts? With the older child a theory of punishments rests less upon the necessity to change the culprit's thoughts than upon the hope of forming a new association of ideas, that is, of certain pains and penalties inevitably attached to certain forms of wrong-doing. This, we know too well, is a teaching of life, and is not to be overlooked in education. The experience of each of us goes to prove that every breach of law, in thought or deed, is attended by its own penalties, immediate or remote, and the child who is not brought up to know that "due follows deed in course," is sent out to his first campaign undrilled and untrained, a raw recruit.

Our contention is (*a*), that the need for punishment

is mostly preventable, and (*b*), that the fear of punishment is hardly ever so strong a motive as the delight of the particular wrong-doing in view. If punishment were necessarily reformatory and able to cure us all of those "sins we have a mind to," why, the world would be a very good world, for no manner of sin escapes its present punishment. The fact is, not that punishment is unnecessary or that it is useless, but that it is inadequate and barely touches our aim; which is, not the visitation of the offence, but the correction of that fault of character of which the offence is the outcome. Jemmy tells lies and we punish him, and by so doing we mark our sense of the offence; but, probably, no punishment could be invented drastic enough to cure Jemmy of telling lies in the future, and this is the thing to be aimed at. No, we must look deeper; we must find out what weak place in character, what false habit of thinking, leads Jemmy to tell lies, and we must deal with this false habit in the only possible way, by forming the contrary habit of true thinking, which will make Jemmy grow up a true man. "I think I have never told a lie since," said a lady, describing the single conversation in which her father cured her of lying by setting up an altogether new train of thought.

Not mere spurts of occasional punishment, but the incessant watchfulness and endeavour which go to the forming and preserving of the habits of the good life, is what we mean by discipline, and from this point of view never were there such disciplinarians as the parents who labour on the lines we indicate. Every habit of courtesy, consideration, order, neatness, punctuality, truthfulness, is itself a schoolmaster, and orders life with the most unfailing diligence.

A habit is so easily formed, so strong to compel.



There are few parents who would not labour diligently if for every month's labour they were able to endow one of their children with £1000. But, in a month, a parent may form a habit in his child of such infinite value that your thousand pounds is a mere bagatelle by comparison. We have often urged that the great discovery which modern science has brought to the aid of the educator is, that every habit of the life sets up, as it were, a material record in the brain tissues. We all know that we think as we are used to think and act as we are used to act. Ever since man began to notice the ways of his own mind this law of habit has been matter of common knowledge, and has been more or less acted upon by parents and other trainers of children. The well brought-up child has always been a child carefully trained in good habits. But it is only within our own day that it has been possible to lay down definite laws for the formation of habits. Until now, the mother who wished to train her children in such and such a good habit has found herself hindered by a certain sense of casualty. "I am sure I am always telling her"—to keep her drawers neat, or to hold up her head and speak nicely, or to be quick and careful about an errand,—says the poor mother, with tears in her eyes; and indeed this, of "always telling" him or her is a weary process for the mother; dull, because hopeless. She goes on "telling" to deliver her own soul, for she has long since ceased to expect any result; and we know how dreary is work without hope. But, perhaps even his mother does not know how unutterably dreary is this "always telling," which produces nothing, to the child. At first he is fretful and impatient under the patter of idle words; then he puts

up with the inevitable, but comes at last hardly to be aware that the thing is being said. As for any impression on his character, any habit really formed, all this labour is without result; the child does the thing when he cannot help it and evades as often as he can. And the poor disappointed mother says, "I'm sure I've tried as much as any mother to train my children in good habits, but I have failed." She is not altogether dispirited, however. The children have not the habits she wished to train them in, but they grow up warm-hearted, good-natured, bright young people, by no means children to be ashamed of. All the same, the mother's sense of failure is a monition to be trusted. Our failures in life are, perhaps, due, for the most part, to the defects of our qualities, and, therefore, it is not enough to send children into the world with just the inheritance of character they get from their parents.

Let us offer a few definite practical counsels to a parent who wishes to deal seriously with a bad habit. *First.*—Let us remember that this bad habit has made its record in the brain. *Second.*—There is one way only of obliterating such record; the absolute cessation of the habit for a considerable space of time, say, some six or eight weeks. *Third.*—During this interval new growth, new cell connections, are somehow or other taking place, and the physical seat of the evil is undergoing a natural healing. *Fourth.*—But the only way to secure this pause is to introduce some new habit as attractive to the child as is the wrong habit you set yourself to cure. *Fifth.*—As the bad habit usually arises from the defect of some quality in the child it should not be difficult for the parent who knows his child's character to introduce the contrary good

habit. *Sixth.*—Take a moment of happy confidence between parent and child; introduce, by tale or example, the stimulating idea; get the child's will with you. *Seventh.*—Do not tell him to do the new thing, but quietly and cheerfully *see that he does it* on all possible occasions, for weeks if need be, all the time stimulating the new idea, until it takes great hold of the child's imagination. *Eighth.*—Watch most carefully against any recurrence of the bad habit. *Ninth.*—Should the old fault recur, do not condone it. Let the punishment, chiefly the sense of your estrangement, be acutely felt. Let the child feel the shame of not only having done wrong, but of having done the wrong when it was perfectly easy to avoid the wrong and do the right. Above all “watch unto prayer” and teach your child dependence upon divine aid in this warfare of the spirit; but also, the absolute necessity for his own efforts.

Susie is an inquisitive little girl. Her mother is surprised and not always delighted to find that the little maid is constantly on voyages of discovery, which the servants speak of to each other as prying and poking. Is her mother engaged in talk with a visitor or the nurse—behold, Susie is at her side, sprung from nobody knows where. Is a confidential letter being read aloud—Susie is within earshot. Does the mother think she has put away a certain book where the children cannot find it—Susie volunteers to produce it. Does she tell her husband that cook has asked for two days leave of absence—up jumps Susie, with all the ins and outs of the case. “I really don't know what to do with the child. It is difficult to put down one's foot and say you ought not to know this or that or the other. Each thing in itself is

harmless enough, but it is a little distressing to have a child who is always peering about for gossipy information." Yes, it is tiresome, but is not a case for despair, nor for thinking hard things of Susie, certainly not for accepting the inevitable. Regarding this tiresome curiosity as the defect of its quality, the mother casts about for the quality, and, behold, Susie is reinstated. What ails the child is an inordinate desire for knowledge, run to seed, and allowed to spend itself on unworthy objects. When the right moment comes, introduce Susie to some delightful study, of Nature, for example, which will employ all her prying proclivities. Once the new idea has taken possession of the little girl, a little talk should follow about the unworthiness of filling one's thoughts with trifling matters so that nothing really interesting can get in. For weeks together see that Susie's mind is too full of large matters to entertain the small ones; and, once the inquisitive habit has been checked, encourage the child's active mind to definite progressive work on things worth while. Susie's unworthy curiosity will soon cease to be a trial to her parents.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *SENSATIONS AND FEELINGS*

#### PART I

CHILDREN whose parents have little theoretic knowledge of the values of the various food-stuffs are often thoroughly nourished ; their parents rely on what they call common-sense ; and the result is, on the whole, better than if scientific consideration were given to the family dietary. But this common-sense has usually scientific opinion for its basis, though the fact may be forgotten, and when scientific opinion has become the groundwork of habit it is of more value, and works in a more simple way, than while it is still in the stage of experiment. In the same way it is a good thing to have such an acquaintance with the functions of human nature that we act on our knowledge unconsciously, and do not even know that we possess it. But if we have no such floating capital of cognisance we must study the subject, even if we have to make experiments. Most people suppose that the sensations, feelings, and emotions of a child are matters that take care of themselves. Indeed, we are apt to use the three terms indiscriminately, without attaching very clear ideas to them. But they cover, collectively, a very important educational field ; and though common sense, that is to say judgments formed upon inherited knowledge, often helps us to act wisely without know-



ing why, we shall probably act more wisely if we act reasonably.

Let us consider, first, the subject of sensations. We speak of sensations of cold, and sensations of heat, and sensations of pain, and we are quite right. We also speak of sensations of fear and sensations of pleasure, and we are commonly wrong. The sensations have their origin in impressions received by the several organs of sense—eye, tongue, nostrils, ear, the surface of the external skin—and are conveyed by the sensory nerves, some to the spinal cord and some to the lower region of the brain. Many sensations we know nothing about ; when we become aware of our sensations it is because communications are sent by nerve fibres, acting as telegraph wires, from the sensorium to the thinking brain, and this happens when we give our *attention* to any one of the multitudinous messages carried by the sensory nerves. The physiology of the senses is too complicated a subject for us to touch upon here, but it is deeply interesting, and perhaps no better introduction exists than Professor Clifford's little book, "Seeing and Thinking" (Macmillan). Now the senses are "The Five Gateways of Knowledge," to quote the title of a little book which many of us have used in early days ; and an intelligent person should be aware of, and capable of forming judgments upon, the sensations he receives.

We all recognise that the training of the senses is an important part of education. One caution is necessary : from the very first a child's sensations should be treated as matters of objective and not of subjective interest. Marmalade, for example, is interesting, not because it is "nice"—a fact not to be dwelt upon at all—but because one can discern in it different flavours and the modifying effect of the oil secreted in the rind of the

orange. We shall have occasion to speak more of this subject later ; but a useful piece of education is this of centering a child's interest in the objects which produce his sensations and not in himself as the receiver of these sensations.

The purpose of so-called object lessons is, to assist a child, by careful examination of a given object, to find out all he can about it through the use of his several senses. General information about the object is thrown in and lodges only because the child's senses have been exercised, and his interest aroused. Object lessons are a little in disfavour, just now, for two reasons. In the first place, miserable fragments are presented to the children which have little of the character of the object *in situ*, and are apt to convey inadequate, if not wrong, ideas. In the next place, object lessons are commonly used as a means to introduce children to hard words, such as opaque and translucent, which never become part of their living thought until they pick them up for themselves incidentally as they have need of them. But the abuse of this kind of teaching should not cause us to overlook its use. No child can grow up without daily object teaching, whether casual or of set purpose, and the more thorough this is the more intelligent and observant will he become. It is singular how few people are capable of developing an intelligent curiosity about the most attractive objects, except as their interest is stimulated from without. The baby is a wonderful teacher in this matter of object lessons. To be sure his single pupil is his own small self, but his progress is amazing. At first he does not see any difference between a picture of a cow and the living animal ; big and little, far and near, hard and soft, hot and cold, are all alike to him ; he wishes to hold the moon in his

pinafore, to sit on the pond, to poke his finger into the candle, not because he is a foolish little person, but because he is profoundly ignorant of the nature of the contents of this unintelligible world. But how he works ! he bangs his spoon to try if it produces sound ; he sucks it to try its flavour ; he fumbles it all over and no doubt finds out whether it is hard or soft, hot or cold, rough or smooth ; he gazes at it with the long gaze of infancy, so that he may learn the look of it ; it is an old friend and an object of desire when he sees it again, for he has found out that there is much joy in a spoon. This goes on with great diligence for a couple of years, at the end of which time baby has acquired enough knowledge of the world to conduct himself in a very dignified and rational way.

This is what happen sunder Nature's teaching ; and for the first five or six years of his life everything, especially everything in action, is an object of intelligent curiosity to the child—the street or the field is a panorama of delight, the shepherd's dog, the baker's cart, the man with the barrow, are full of vivid interest. He has a thousand questions to ask, he wants to know about everything ; he has, in fact, an inordinate appetite for knowledge. We soon cure all that : we occupy him with books instead of things ; we evoke other desires in place of the desire to know ; and we succeed in bringing up the unobservant man (and more unobservant woman), who discerns no difference between an elm, a poplar and a lime tree, and misses very much of the joy of living. By the way, why is it that the baby does not exercise with purpose his organ of smell ? He screws up a funny little nose when he is taught to sniff at a flower, but this is a mere trick ; he does not naturally make experiments as to whether things are odorous, while each of his other senses

affords him keen joy. No doubt the little nose is involuntarily very active, but can his inertness in this matter be an hereditary failing? It may be that we all allow ourselves to go about with obtuse nostrils. If so, this is a matter for the attention of mothers, who should bring up their children not only to receive, which is involuntary and vague, but to perceive odours from the first.

Two points call for our attention in this education of the senses; we must assist the child to educate himself on Nature's lines, and we must take care not to supplant and crowd out Nature and her methods with that which we call education. Object lessons should be incidental; and this is where the family enjoys so great an advantage over the school. It is almost impossible that the school should give any but set lessons, but this sort of teaching in the family falls in with the occurrence of the object. The child who finds that wonderful and beautiful object, a "paper" wasp's nest, attached to a larch-twigg, has his object lesson on the spot from father or mother. The grey colour, the round symmetrical shape, the sort of cup and ball arrangement, the papery texture, the comparative size, the comparative smoothness, the odour or lack of odour, the extreme lightness, the fact that it is not cold to the touch. These and fifty other particulars the child finds out unaided, or with no more than a word, here and there, to direct his observation. One does not every day find a wasp's nest, but much can be got out of every common object, and the commoner the better, which falls naturally under the child's observation, a piece of bread, a lump of coal, a sponge. In the first place it is unnecessary in the family to give an exhaustive examination to every object; one quality might be discussed in this,



another quality in that. We eat our bread and milk and notice that bread is absorbent, and we overhaul our experience to discover other things which we know to be absorbent also, and we do what we can to compare these things as to whether they are less absorbent or more absorbent than bread. This is exceedingly important: the unobservant person states that an object is light and considers that he has stated an ultimate fact: the observant person makes the same statement, but has in his mind a relative scale, and his judgment is of the more value because he compares it silently with a series of substances to which this is relatively light. It is important that children should learn to recognise that high, low, sweet, bitter, long, short, agreeable, &c., &c., are comparative terms, while square, round, black, white, are positive terms, the application of which is not affected by comparison with other objects. Care in this matter makes for higher moral, as well as intellectual development: half the dissensions in the world arise from an indiscriminate use of epithets. "Would you say your bread (at dinner) was light or heavy?" The child would probably answer, "rather light." "Yes, we can only say that a thing is light by comparing it with others; what is bread light compared with?" "A stone, a piece of coal, of cheese, of butter of the same size." "But it is heavy compared with?" "A piece of sponge cake, a piece of sponge, of cork, of pumice," and so on. "What do you think it weighs?" "An ounce, an ounce and a half." "We'll try after dinner; you had better have another piece and save it," and the weighing after dinner is a delightful operation. The power of judging of weight is worth cultivating. We heard the other day of a gentleman who was required at a



bazaar to guess the weight of a monster cake ; he said it weighed twenty-eight pounds fourteen ounces, and it did, exactly. *Cæteris paribus*, one has a greater respect for the man who made this accurate judgment than for the well-intentioned but vague person, who suggested that the cake might weigh ten pounds. Letters, book parcels, an apple, an orange, a vegetable marrow, fifty things in the course of the day give opportunities for this kind of object teaching, *i.e.*, the power of forming accurate judgments as to the relative and absolute weight of objects by their resistance, which is perceived by our sense of touch, though opposed to our muscular force. By degrees the children are trained to perceive that the relative weights of objects depend upon their relative density, and are introduced to the fact that we have a standard of weight.

In the same way children should be taught to measure objects by the eye. How high is that candlestick? How long and broad that picture-frame? and so on—verifying their statements. What is the circumference of that bowl? of the clock-face? of that flower-bed? How tall is so-and-so, and so-and-so? How many hands high are the horses of their acquaintance? Divide a slip of wood, a sheet of paper into halves, thirds, quarters by the eye; lay a walking-stick at right angles with another; detect when a picture, curtain, &c., hangs out of the perpendicular. This sort of practice will secure for children what is called a correct or true eye.

A quick and true ear is another possession that does not come by Nature, or anyway, if it does, it is too often lost. How many sounds can you distinguish in a sudden silence out of doors? Let these be named in order from the less to the more acute.

Let the notes of the birds be distinguished, both call-notes and song-notes; the four or five distinct sounds to be heard in the flow of a brook. Cultivate accuracy in distinguishing footfalls and voices; in discerning, with their eyes shut, the direction from which a sound proceeds, in which footsteps are moving. Distinguish passing vehicles by their sounds; as lorry, brougham, dog-cart. Music is, no doubt, the instrument *par excellence* for this kind of ear culture. Mrs. Curwen's "Child Pianist" puts carefully graduated means for this kind of culture into the hands of parents; and, if a child never become a performer, to have acquired a cultivated and correct ear is no small part of a musical education.

We do not attach enough importance to the discrimination of odours, whether as a safeguard to health, or as a source of pleasure. Half the people one knows have nostrils which register no difference between the atmosphere of a large, and so-called "airy," room, whose windows are never opened, and that of a room in which a through current of air is arranged for at frequent intervals: and yet health depends largely on a delicate perception as to the purity of the atmosphere. The odours which result in diphtheria or typhoid are perceptible, however faint, and a nose trained to detect the faintest malodorous particles in food, clothing, or dwelling, is a panoply against disease to the possessor.

Then, odours enter more readily than other sense perceptions into those—

"Sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,"

which add so much to the sum of our happiness, because they unite themselves so readily with our

purely incorporeal joys by links of association. "I never smell woodruff without being reminded——" is the sort of thing we hear and say continually, but we do not trouble ourselves to realise that we owe a double joy to the odour of the woodruff (or it may be, alas! a reflected sorrow)—the joy of the pleasant influences about us when we pluck the flower, and the possibly more personal joy of that other time with which we associate it. Every new odour perceived is a source, if not of warning, of recurrent satisfaction or interest. We are acquainted with too few of the odours which the spring-time offers. Only this spring the present writer learned two peculiarly delightful odours quite new to her, that of young larch twigs, which have much the same kind and degree of fragrance as the flower of the syringa, and the pleasant musky aroma of a box-hedge. Children should be trained, for example, to shut their eyes when they come into the drawing-room and discover by their nostrils what odorous flowers are present, should discriminate the garden odours let loose by a shower of rain :—

"Houses and rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are  
crowded with perfumes,  
I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it.

The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of the  
distillation, it is odourless,  
It is for my mouth for ever, I am in love with it.

The sniff of green leaves, and dry leaves, and of the shore,  
and dark-coloured sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn."

—The American poet has, perhaps, done more than any other to express the pleasure to be found in

odours. This is one direction in which much remains to be done; we have not yet arrived even at a scale of odours, as of sound and of colour.

Flavour, again, offers a wide range for delicate discrimination. At first sight it would appear difficult to cultivate the sense of flavour without making a child more or less of a gourmand, but the fact is, that the strong flavours which titillate the palate destroy the power of perception. The young child who lives upon milk-foods has, probably, more pleasure in flavour than the diner-out who is *au fait* with the confections of a *cordons bleu*. At the same time, one would prefer to make flavour a source of interest rather than of sensuous pleasure to children: it is better that they should try to discern a flavour with their eyes shut, for example, than that they should be allowed to think or say that things are "nice" or "nasty." This sort of fastidiousness should be cried down. It is not well to make a child eat what he does not like, as that would only make him dislike that particular dish always; but to let him feel that he shows a want of self-control and manliness when he expresses distaste for wholesome food is likely to have a lasting effect.

We have barely touched on the sorts of object lessons, appealing now to one sense and now to another, which should come incidentally every day in the family. We are apt to regard an American Indian as a quite uneducated person; he is, on the contrary, highly educated in so far as that he is able to discriminate sensory impressions, and to take action upon these in a way which is bewildering to the book-learned European. It would be well for parents to educate a child, for the first half-dozen years of his life at any rate, on "Red Indian" lines. Besides the few points we have

mentioned, he should be able to discriminate colours and shades of colour; relative degrees of heat in woollen, wood, iron, marble, ice; should learn the use of the thermometer; should discriminate objects according to their degrees of hardness; should have a cultivated eye and touch for texture; should, in fact, be able to get as much information about an object from a few minutes' study, as to its form, colour, texture, size, weight, qualities, parts, characteristics, as he could learn out of many pages of a printed book. We approach the subject by the avenue of the child's senses rather than by that of the objects to be studied, because just now we have in view the occasional test exercises, the purpose of which is to give thorough culture to the several senses. An acquaintance with nature and natural objects is another thing, and is to be approached in a slightly different way. A boy who is observing a beetle does not consciously apply his several senses to the beetle, but lets the beetle take the initiative, which the boy reverently follows: but the boy who is in the habit of doing daily sensory gymnastics will learn a great deal more about the beetle than he who is not so trained.

Definite object lessons differ from these incidental exercises in that an object is in a manner exhausted by each of the senses in turn and every atom of information it will yield got out of it. A good plan is to make this sort of a lesson a game, pass your object round—piece of bread, for example—and let each child tell some fact that he discovers by touch, another round by smell, again by taste, and again by sight. Children are most ingenious in this kind of game, and it affords opportunities to give them new words, as friable, elastic, when they really ask to be helped to express some discovery they have made. The children



learn to think with exactitude too, to distinguish between friable and brittle, for example, and any common information that is offered to them in the course of these exercises becomes a possession for ever. A good game in the nature of an object lesson, suitable for a birthday party, is to have a hundred small objects arranged on a table, unknown to the children, then lead the little party into the room, allow them three minutes to walk round the table, and then, when they have left the room, let them write, or tell in a corner, the names of all the objects they recollect. Some children will easily get fifty or sixty.

No doubt the best and happiest exercise of the senses springs out of a loving familiarity with the world of nature, but the sorts of gymnastics we have indicated render the perceptions more acute and are greatly enjoyed by children. That the sensations should not be permitted to minister unduly to the subjective consciousness of the child is the great point to be borne in mind.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SENSATIONS AND FEELINGS

#### PART II

“These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man’s eye ;  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and ’mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration :—feelings, too,  
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man’s life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love.”

—W. WORDSWORTH, *Tintern Abbey*.

INSIGHT—the so to speak scientific grip of a great poet—is amongst those “more things” in heaven and earth than our philosophy has dreamed of. Wordsworth tells us that after the lapse of years, these beauteous forms (of Tintern Abbey) gave him sensations. Now we are apt to think that sensations can only be immediate, perceived on the instant that the object is present to the senses ; but the poet is, as usual, absolutely right : we may have, so to speak, reflected sensations, as well as those that are immediate, because a conscious sensation depends upon the recognition of an impression in the sensory centres,

and this recognition may be evoked, not only by a repeated sensation, but by an association which recalls the image once permanently impressed by the original sensation. Wordsworth is exquisitely right when he speaks of the repeated enjoyment of sensations sweet. "In lonely rooms and 'mid the din of towns and cities" some sudden touch of the cords of association has brought to him the soothing joy of a picture—"Forms" with every grace of symmetry, harmony, venerable antiquity, in the ever fresh and gracious setting of a beautiful landscape. The eye of his mind is infinitely gladdened; the ear of his mind, no longer conscious of the din of cities, hears the chord struck by the Wye in its flow, and the notes of the birds and the lowing of the cattle and the acuter notes of the insect world. Again he perceives the odour of the meadow-sweet, he touches the coolness of the grass, and all these are as absolutely sensations as when they were for the first time conveyed to his consciousness by the sensory organs.

We have in these few lines a volume of reasons why we should fill the storehouse of memory for the children with many open-air images, capable of giving them reflected sensations of extreme delight. Our care all the time must be to secure that they do look, and listen, touch, and smell, and the way to this is by sympathetic action on our part: what we look at they will look at; the odours we perceive they too will get. We heard, the other day, of a little girl who travelled in Italy with her parents, in the days of dignified family travelling-carriages. The child's parents were conscientious, and time was precious, not by any means to be wasted on the mere idleness of travelling, so the governess and the little girl had the *coupé* to themselves, and in it were packed all the

paraphernalia of the schoolroom, and she did her sums, learned her geography, probably the counties of England, and all the rest of it, with the least possible waste of time in idle curiosity as to what the "faire londes," through which she was passing, might be like. A story like this shows that we are making advances, but we are still far from fully recognising that our part in the education of children should be thoughtfully subordinated to that played by Nature herself.

To continue our study of this amazingly accurate, as well as exquisitely beautiful, psychological record:—the poet goes on to tell us that these sensations sweet are "felt in the blood and felt along the heart," a statement curiously true to fact, for a pleasurable sensation causes the relaxation of the infinitesimal nerve fibres netted around the capillaries, the blood flows freely, the heart beats quicker, the sense of well-being is increased; gaiety, gladness supervene; and the gloom of the dull day, and the din of the busy city, exist for us no more; that is to say, memories of delight are, as it were, an elixir of life capable, when they present themselves, of restoring us at any moment to a condition of physical well-being.

But even this is not the whole. Wordsworth speaks of these memories as "passing into my purer mind with tranquil restoration"—purer because less corporeal, less affected by physical conditions, but all the same so intimately related to the physical brain, that the condition of the one must rule the other. Mind and brain perhaps have been alike fagged by the insistent recurrence of some one line of thought, when suddenly there flashes into the "purer mind" the cognition of images of delight, represented in consequence of a touch to some spring of association: the current of

thought is diverted into new and delightful channels, and weariness and brain fag give place to "tranquil restoration."

If mere sensations are capable of doing so much for our happiness, our mental refreshment, and our physical well-being, both at the time of their reception and for an indefinite number of times afterwards, it follows that it is no small part of our work as educators to preserve the acuteness of the children's perceptions, and to store their memories with images of delight.

The poet pursues the investigation and makes a pointed distinction; he not only recovers "sensations sweet," but "feelings, too, of unremembered pleasure." Very few persons are capable of discriminating between the sensations and the feelings produced by an image recovered by some train of association. Wordsworth's psychology is not only delicately nice, but very just, and the distinction he draws is important to the educator. The truth is "the feelings" are out of fashion at present; *The Man of Feeling* is a person of no account; if he still exists he keeps in the shade, being aware, through a certain quickness of perception which belongs to him, that any little efflorescence proper to his character would be promptly reduced to pulp by the application of a sledge hammer. *The Man of Feeling* has himself to thank for this; he allowed his feelings to become fantastic; his sweet sensibilities ran away with him; he meant pathos and talked bathos; he became an exaggerated type, and in self-preservation Society always cut off the offending limb, so *The Man of Feeling* is no more. Nor is this the only charge that "the feelings" have to sustain. So long as the feelings remain objective they are, like the bloom to the



peach, the last perfection of a beautiful character ; but when they become subjective, when every feeling concerns itself with the *ego*, we have, as in the case of sensations, morbid conditions set up ; the person begins by being "over sensitive," hysteria supervenes, perhaps melancholia, an utterly spoilt life. George Eliot has a fine figure which aptly illustrates this subjective condition of the feelings. She tells us that a philosophic friend had pointed out to her that whereas the surface of a mirror or of a steel plate may be covered with minute scratches going in every direction, if you hold a lighted candle to the surface all these random scratches appear to arrange themselves and radiate from the central flame : just so with the person whose feelings have been permitted to minister to his egoistic consciousness : all things in heaven and earth are "felt" as they affect his own personality.

What are the feelings ? Perhaps they are best expressed in Coleridge's phrase of "a vague appetency of the mind" ; and we may do something to clear our thoughts by a negative examination. The feelings are *not* sensations, because they have no necessary connection with the senses ; they are to be distinguished from the two great affections (of love and justice) because they are not actively exercised upon any objects ; they are distinct from the desires because they demand no gratification ; and they are distinguishable from the intellectual operations which we call thought, because while thought proceeds from an idea, is active, and arrives at a result, the feelings arise from perceptions, are passive, and not definitely progressive.

Every feeling has its positive and its negative, and these in almost infinitely varying degrees : pleasure, displeasure ; appreciation, depreciation ; anticipation, foreboding ; admiration, contempt ; assurance, hesi-

tancy ; diffidence, complacency ; and so on through many more delicate *nuances* of feeling that are nameable, and yet more so delicate that language is too rough an instrument for their expression. It will be observed that all these feelings have certain conditions in common ; none are distinctly moral or immoral ; they have not arrived at the stage of definite thought ; they exist vaguely in what would appear to be a semi-conscious intellectual region. Why then need we concern ourselves about this little known tract of that *terra incognita* which we call human nature ? This "why" is the question of the prose-philosopher—our poet sees deeper. In one of the most exquisitely discriminating passages in the whole field of poetry, he speaks of feelings of unremembered pleasure as having no slight or trivial influence on a good man's life, as the source of "little nameless unremembered acts of kindness and of love." Even the feeling of "*unremembered* pleasure"—for it is possible to have the spring of association touched so lightly that one recovers the feeling of former pleasure without recovering the sensation, or the image which produced the sensation, but merely just the vague feeling of the pleasure, as when one hears the word 'Lohengrin' and does not wait, as it were, to recover the sensation of musical delight, but just catches a waft of the pleasure which the sensation brought—intangible, indefinite as they are, produce that glow of the heart which warms a good man to "acts of kindness and of love," as little, as nameless, and as unremembered as the feelings out of which they spring.

Nameless as they are, our poet does not hesitate to rank these trifling acts as the "best portion of a good man's life." But it is only out of the good man's heart that these good issues come, because, as we have

said, the feelings are not in themselves moral, they act upon that which is there, and the point brought before us is, that the influence of the feelings is equally powerful and indirect. Why should the recollection of Tintern Abbey cause a good man to do some little kind thing? We can only give the ultimate answer that "God has made us so," that a feeling of even unremembered pleasure prompts the good man to give forth out of the good treasure of his heart in kindness and in love. We have but to think of the outcome of feelings at the negative pole to convince us of the nice exactitude of the poet's psychology. We are not exactly displeased, but unpleased, dull, not quickened by any feeling of pleasure: let us ask ourselves if, in this condition of our feelings, we are prompted to any outpouring of love and kindness upon our neighbours.

Here is another aspect of the feelings of very great importance to us who have the education of children.

"I do not like you, Doctor Fell,  
The reason why I cannot tell,"

is a feeling we all know well enough, and is, in fact, that intuitive perception of character—one of our finest feelings and best guides in life—which is too apt to be hammered out of us by the constant effort to beat down our sensibilities to the explicit and definite. One wonders why people complain of faithless friends, untrustworthy servants, and disappointed affections. If the feelings were retained in truth and simplicity, there is little doubt that they would afford for each of us such a touchstone of character in the persons we come in contact with, that we should be saved from making exigent demands on the one hand, and from suffering disappointment on the other.

The public orator plays, by preference, upon the

gamut of the feelings. He throws in arguments by the way ; brightens his discourse with graphic word-picture, metaphor, simile ; but for his final effect he relies upon the impression he has been able to make upon the feelings of his audience, and the event proves him to be right.

Not only our little nameless acts but the great purposes of our lives arise out of our feelings. Enthusiasm itself is not thought, though it arises when we are

“Stung with the rapture of a sudden thought ;”

it is a glowing, malleable condition of the forces of our nature, during which all things are possible to us, and we only wait for a lead. Enthusiasm in its earliest stage is inconsequent, incoherent, devoid of purpose, and yet is the state out of which all the great purposes of life shape themselves. We feel, we think, we say, we do ; this is the genesis of most of our activities.

But our feelings, as our thoughts, depend upon what we are ; we feel in all things as “’tis our nature to,” and the point to be noticed is that our feelings are educable, and that in educating the feelings we modify the character. A pressing danger of our day is that the delicate task of educating shall be exchanged for the much simpler one of blunting the feelings. This is the almost inevitable result of a system where training is given *en masse* ; but not the necessary result, because the tone of feeling of a head-master or mistress is almost with certainty conveyed, more or less, to a whole school. Still, perhaps, the perfect bloom of the feelings can only be preserved under quite judicious individual culture, and, therefore, necessarily devolves upon parents. The



instrument to be employed in this culture is always the same—the blessed sixth sense of Tact. It is possible to call up the feeling one desires by a look, a gesture; to dissipate it entirely by the rudeness of a spoken word. Our silence, our sympathy, our perception give place and play to fit feelings, and equally discourage, and cause to slink away ashamed the feeling which should not have place. But let us beware of words; let us use our eyes and our imagination in dealing with the young; let us see what they are feeling and help them by the flow of our responsive feeling. But words, even words of praise and tenderness, touch this delicate bloom of nature as with a hot finger, and behold! it is gone. Let us consider carefully what feelings we wish to stimulate, and what feelings we wish to repress in our children, and then, having made up our minds, let us say nothing. We all know the shrinking, as of a sore place, with which children receive some well-meant word from a tactless friend.

The sense of spiritual touch is our only guide in this region of the feelings, but with this alone we may tune the spirits of the children to great issues, believing that they are capable of all things great. We wish them to revere. Now reverence is a feeling before it becomes a thought or an act, and it is a communicable feeling, but communicable like the light of a torch only by contact. The sentiment of reverence fills our own souls when we see a bird on its nest, an old man at his cottage door, a church in which have centred the aspirations of a village for many an age; we feel and the children feel our feeling, and they feel too: a feeling is communicated by sympathy, but perhaps in no other way. The ignoble habit of depreciation is in the first place a



feeling. It is quite easy to put the children into that other attitude of feeling called forth by the fitness and goodness of the thing regarded, and we all know that it is easy to appreciate or depreciate the same thing. These two feelings alone illustrate the importance of the delicate culture we have in view, for among the minor notes of character none tend more to differentiate persons than this of perceiving cause of satisfaction in an object or a person, or of perceiving cause of dissatisfaction in the same object or person. An appreciative habit of feeling is a cause of tranquil joy to its possessor, and of ease and contentment to the people connected with him. A depreciative habit, on the contrary, though it affords a little pleasurable excitement because it ministers to the vanity of the *ego* (I dislike this person or this thing, therefore I know better or am better than others), disturbs tranquillity and puts the person out of harmony with himself and with his surroundings; no stable joy comes of depreciation. But even in dealing with feelings of this class we must remember that tact, sympathy and communicable feeling are our only implements; the feelings are not thoughts to be reasoned down; they are neither moral nor immoral to challenge our praise or our blame; we cannot be too reticent in our dealings with them in children, nor too watchfully aware that the least inadvertence may bruise some tender blossom of feeling. This is the risk which attends the habit of persiflage and banter in family talk; a little is thoroughly good and wholesome, but this kind of play should be used with very great tact, especially by the elders. Children understand each other so well that there is far less risk of hurt feelings from

the tormenting schoolboy than from the more considerate elder.

There is only one case in which the feelings may not have free play, and that is when they reflect the consciousness of the *ego*. What are commonly called sensitive feelings—that is, susceptibility for oneself and about oneself, readiness to perceive neglect or slight, condemnation or approbation—though belonging to a fine and delicate character, are in themselves of less worthy order, and require very careful direction lest morbid conditions should be set up. To ignore wisely is an art, and the girl who craves to know what you thought of her when she said this or did the other, need not be told brutally that you did not think of her at all; it is quite enough for her to perceive that your regard is fixed upon something impersonal both to her and you; she takes the hint and looks away from herself, and nothing is said to cause her pain. It appears to be an immutable law that our feelings, as our sensations, must find their occupation in things without; the moment they are turned in upon themselves harm is done. The task of dealing with the susceptibilities of young people is one of the most delicate that falls to us elders, whether we be parents or friends. Undiscriminating sympathy is very perilous, and bluntness of perception is very damaging; we are between Scylla and Charybdis, and must needs walk humbly and warily in this delicate work of dealing with the feelings of children and young people. Our only safeguard is to cherish in ourselves “the soft, meek, tender soul,” sensitive to the touch of God, and able to deal in soft, meek, tender ways with children, beings of fine and delicate mould as they are.

## CHAPTER XIX

### “WHAT IS TRUTH?”

IT is said that we English are no longer to be characterised as a truth-speaking people. This is a distressing charge, and yet we cannot put it away from us with a high hand. Possibly we are in a stage of civilisation which does not tend to produce the fine courage of absolute truthfulness. He who is without fear is commonly without falsehood; and a nation brought up amid the chivalries of war dares to be true. But we live in times of peace: we are no longer called on to defend the truth of our word by the strength of our hand. We speak with very little sense of responsibility, because no one calls us to account; and, so far as we are truth-tellers, we are so out of pure truth of heart and uprightness of life. That is, we may be, as a nation, losing the habit of truth to which the nation's childhood was trained, in ways however rough and ready; but we are growing up, and the truth that is among us is perhaps of a higher quality than the more general truthfulness of earlier days. Now, truth is indeed the white flower of a blameless life, and not the mere result of a fearless habit. The work before us is to bring up our children to this higher manner of truth. We no longer treat this or that particular lie or bit of deceit as a local ailment, for which we have only to apply the proper lotion or plaster; we treat it as symptomatic, as

denoting a radical defect of character which we set ourselves to correct.

Opinion without knowledge, says Darwin, has no value, and to treat the tendency to untruthfulness that children often show, one should have a good deal of knowledge of a special kind. To treat a child *de novo*, place him under a moral microscope, record our observations, and formulate opinions based upon that child, and as many more as we can get into focus, is, no doubt, useful and important work. But it is work for which we must qualify ourselves. The child is a human being, immature, but yet, perhaps, a human being at his best. Who amongst us has such gifts of seeing, knowing, comprehending, imagining, such capacities for loving, giving, believing, as the little child in the midst! We have no higher praise for our wisest and best than that they are fresh and keen as little children in their interests and loves.

Now, we maintain that it is not sufficient to bring unaided common sense and good intentions to this most delicate art of child-study. We cannot afford to discard the wisdom of the past and begin anew with the effort to collect and systematise, hoping to accomplish as much and more in our short span than the centuries have brought us.

In this matter of lying, for example, unaided common sense is likely to start upon one of two theses: either the child is born true, and you must keep him so; or, the child is born false, and you must cure him of it. Popular opinion leans strongly to the first theory in these days; and, as we perceive only that which we believe, the tendency is, perhaps, to take the absolute truthfulness and honour of children a little too much for granted. If you would have children true, you must, of course, treat them as if they were

true, and believe them to be true. But, all the same, wisdom may not play the ostrich. In the last generation, people accepted their children as born false, and, what more likely to make them so than this foregone conclusion? Possibly some falling off in truthfulness in our day is traceable to the dogmatic teaching upon which our forbears were brought up.

The wisdom of the ages—*i.e.*, philosophy, and the science of the present, especially physiology, and more particularly what we may call psycho-physiology—show us that both these positions are wrong, and that all theories founded upon either position, or upon any midway point between the two, must needs be wrong too. A child is born neither true nor false. He is absolutely without either virtue or vice when he comes into the world. He has tendencies, indeed, but these are no more either virtuous or vicious than is the colour of his eyes. Even the child of a liar is not necessarily born a liar, because, we are assured, acquired tendencies are not transmitted. But there is this to be said. The child born of a family which has from generation to generation been in a subject position may have less predisposition to truthfulness than the child of a family which has belonged for generations to the ruling class. As in the natural world all substances must be reduced to their elements before they can be chemically dealt with, so in the moral world, if we wish to treat an offence, it is best to trace it to that elemental property of human nature of which it is the probable outcome. Now, lying, even in its worst forms, is by no means elemental. Ambition is elemental, avarice, vanity, gratitude, love and hate. But lying arises from secondary causes. The treatment is all the more difficult. It is no longer a



case of—the child has lied, punish him ; but, where is the weak place in his character, or what is the defect in his education, which has induced this lying habit, if it be a habit? How shall we, not punish the lie, but treat the failing of which it is symptomatic. From this point of view let us consider the extremely interesting classification of lies presented to us by an American educationalist.\*

I. *Pseudophobia*. Janet *thinks* she *may* have glanced at Mary's slate, and seen the answer to her sum. A comparison of the two slates shows that she has not done so, and that Janet, in the effort to save herself from a lie, has actually told one. This sort of morbid conscientiousness is Argus-eyed for other forms of sin. We knew a sick girl of fourteen, who was terribly unhappy because she was not able to kneel up in bed when she said her prayers. Was this the "unpardonable sin"? she asked, in unaffected terror. We agree with the writer in question, as to the frequent occurrence of this form of distress, and also in tracing it, not to moral, but to physical causes. We should say, too, it is more common in girls than in boys, and in the home-taught than in the school-taught child. Healthy interests, out-of-door life, engrossing and delightful handiworks, general occupation with things rather than with thoughts, and avoidance of any word or hint that may lead to self-consciousness or the habit of introspection, will probably do much to carry the young sufferer through a difficult stage of life.

II. *The Lie Heroic*. The lie heroic is, *par excellence*, the schoolboy's lie, and has its rise, not in any love for lying, but in a want of moral balance ; that is to

\* Professor G. Stanley Hall, in an article which appeared in the *American Journal of Psychology*, Jan. 1891.

say, the boy has been left to form his own code of ethics.

Who spilled the ink? little Tom Brown is asked. "I did," he says; because Jack Spender, the real culprit, is his particular hero at the moment. Faithfulness to a friend is a far higher virtue in Tom's eyes than mere barren truthfulness. And how is Tom to know, if he has not been taught, that it is unlawful to cherish one virtue at the expense of another. Considering how little clear, definite, authoritative teaching children receive on ethical questions, the wonder is that most persons do elaborate some kind of moral code, or code of honour, for themselves.

III. *Truth for friends, lies for enemies.* A lie under this head differs from the lie heroic chiefly in that it need not bring any risk to the speaker. This class of lies again points to the moral ignorance which we are slow to recognise in children because we confound innocence with virtue. It is quite natural for a child to believe that truth is relative, and not absolute, and that whether a lie is a lie or not depends on whom you are speaking to. The children are in the position of "jesting Pilate." What is truth? they unconsciously ask.

IV. *Lies inspired by selfishness.* This is a form of lying for which superficial treatment is quite idle. The lie and the vice of which it is the instrument are so allied that those two cannot be put asunder. Professor Stanley Hall well points out that school is a fertile field for this kind of lying. But it is the selfishness and not the lying that must be dealt with. Cure the first, and the second disappears, having no further *raison d'être*. How? This is a hard question. Nothing but a strong impulse to the heroism of

unselfishness, initiated and sustained by the grace of God, will deliver boy or girl from the vice of selfishness of which lying is the ready handmaid. But let us not despair; *every* boy and girl is open to such impulse, is capable of heroic effort. Prayer and patience, and watchfulness for opportunities to convey the stimulating suggestion—these will not be in vain. *Every* boy and girl is a hero *in posse*. There is no worse infidelity than that which gives up the hope of mending any flaw of character, however bad, in a young creature. All the same, happy those parents who have not allowed selfishness and virtue (whether in the form of truthfulness, or under some other name), to come to hand to hand conflict. It is easy to give direction to the tendencies of a child; it is agonisingly difficult to alter the set of character in a man.

V. *The Deception of imagination and play.* I passed little Muriel in the park one day; the child was not looking; her companion was unknown to me. I was engaged with my companion, and believed that Muriel had not noticed me. The little girl went home and told her mother that I had kissed her and asked various questions about the family health. What could be the child's motive? She had none. Her active imagination rehearsed the little dialogue which most naturally would have taken place; and this was so real to her that it obscured the fact. The reality, the truth, to Muriel, was what she imagined had taken place. She had probably no recollection whatever of the actual facts. This sort of failure in verbal truthfulness is excessively common in imaginative children, and calls for prompt attention and treatment; but not on the lines a hasty and righteous parent might be inclined to adopt. Here is no call for moral indignation

The parents and not the child are in fault. The probability is that the child's ravenous imagination is not duly and daily supplied with its proper meat, of fairy tale in early days, of romance, later. Let us believe of the children that "trailing clouds of glory do they come" from the place where all things are possible, where any delightful thing may happen. Let us believe that our miserable limitations of time and space and the laws of matter irk them inconceivably, imprison the free soul as a wild bird in a cage. If we refuse to give the child outlets into the realms of fancy, where everything is possible, the delicate Ariel of his imagination will still work within our narrow limits upon our poor tasks, and every bit of our narrow living is played over with a thousand variations, apt to be more vivid and interesting than the poor facts, and, therefore, more likely to remain with the child as the facts which he will produce when required to speak the truth. What is the cure? Give the child free entrance into, abundant joyous living in, the kingdom of make-believe. Let him people every glen with fairies, every island with Crusoes. Let him gift every bird and beast with human interests, which he will share when the dear fairy godmother arrives with an introduction. Let us be glad and rejoice that all things are possible to the children, recognising in this condition of theirs their fitness to receive and believe and understand, as, alas! we cannot do, the things of the Kingdom of God. The age of faith is a great sowing time, doubtless designed, in the Divine scheme of things, especially that parents may make their children at home in the things of the Spirit before contact with the world shall have materialised them.

At the same time the more imaginative the child,

the more essential is it that the boundaries of the kingdom of make-believe should be clearly defined, and exact truthfulness insisted upon in all that concerns the narrower world where the grown-ups live. It is simply a matter of careful education; daily lessons in exact statement, without any horror or righteous indignation about misstatements, but warm, loving encouragement to the child who gives a long message quite accurately, who tells you just what Miss Brown said and no more, just what happened at Harry's party, without any garnish. Every day affords scope for a dozen little lessons at least, and, gradually, the more severe beauty of truth will dawn upon the child whose soul is already possessed by the grace of fiction.

VI. *Pseudomania*. We have little to say on this score, except to counsel parents to keep watch at the place of the letting out of waters. No doubt the condition is pathological, and calls for curative treatment rather than punishment. But we believe it is a condition which never need be set up. The girl who has been able to win esteem for what she really is and really does, is not tempted to "pose," and the boy who has found full outlet for his energies, physical and mental, has no part of himself left to spend upon "humbugging." This is one of the cases which show how important it is for parents to acquaint themselves with that delicate borderland of human nature which touches the material and the spiritual. How spiritual thought and material brain interact; how brain and nerves are inter-dependent; how fresh air and wholesome food affect the condition of the blood which nourishes the nerves; how the nerves again may bear tyrannous sway over all that we include under "bodily health;" these are matters that



the parent should know who would avoid the possibility of the degradation described as Pseudomania from being set up in any one of his children.

It is as well that those who have to do with young people should be familiar with one or two marked signs of this mentally diseased condition ; as, the furtive glance from under half-closed lids, shot up to see how you are taking it all ; the flowing recital, accompanied by a slightly absent pre-occupied look, which denotes that the speaker is in the act of inventing the facts he relates.

We have not space to enlarge upon *palliatives*, *lies of terror*, or one or two more classes of lies, which seem to us of frequent occurrence, as *lies of display* (boasting), *lies of carelessness* (inaccuracy), and, worst of all, *lies of malice* (false witness).

We would only commend the subject to the attention of parents ; for, though one child may have more aptitude than another, neither truthfulness nor the multiplication table come by nature. The child who appears to be perfectly truthful is so because he has been carefully trained to truthfulness, however indirectly and unconsciously. It is more important to cultivate the habit of truth than to deal with the accident of lying.

Moral teaching must be as simple, direct and definite as the teaching which appeals to the intellect ; presented with religious sanctions, quickened by religious impulses, but not limited to the prohibitions of the law nor to the penalties which overtake the transgressor.

## CHAPTER XX

### *SHOW CAUSE WHY*

WE have been asking, WHY? like Mr. Ward Fowler's Wagtail, for a long time. We asked, Why? about linen underclothing, and behold it is discarded. We asked Why? about numberless petticoats, and they are going. We are asking Why? about carpets and easy chairs, and all manner of luxurious living; and probably the year 1900 will see of these things only the survivals. It is well we should go about with this practical Why? rather than with the "Why does a wagtail wag its tail?" manner of problem. The latter issues in vain guesses, and the pseudo-knowledge which puffeth up. But if, Why? leads us to—"Because we should not; then, let us do the thing we should."—This manner of Why? is like a poker to a dying fire.

Why is Tom Jones sent to school? That he may be educated, of course, say his parents. And Tom is dismissed with the fervent hope that he may take a good place. But never a word about the delights of learning, or of the glorious worlds of nature and of thought to which his school studies will presumably prove an open sesame. "Mind you be a good boy and get a good place in your class," is Tom's valediction; and his little soul quickens with purpose. He won't disappoint father, and mother shall be proud of him. He'll be the top boy in his class. Why, he'll be the

top boy in the whole school, and get prizes and things, and won't that be jolly! Tommy says nothing of this, but his mother sees it in his eyes and blesses the manly little fellow. So Tommy goes to school, happy boy, freighted with his father's hopes and his mother's blessings. By-and-by comes a report, the main delight of which is, that Tommy has gained six places; more places gained, prizes, removes—by-and-by scholarships. Before he is twelve, Tommy is able to earn the whole of his future schooling by his skill in that industry of the young popularly known as *Exams*. Now he aims at larger game; "exams" still, but "exams" big with possibilities, "exams" which will carry him through his University career. His success is pretty certain, because you get into the trick of "exams" as of other crafts. His parents are congratulated, Tom is more or less of a hero in his own eyes and in those of his compeers. Examinations for ever! Hip, hip! Never was a more facile way for a youth to distinguish himself, that is, if his parents have sent him into the world blessed with any inheritance of brains. For the boy not so blessed—why, he may go to the Colonies and that will make a man of him.

The girls come in a close second. The "Junior," the "Senior," the "Higher," the "Intermediate," the "B.A.," and what else you will, mark the epochs in most girls' lives. Better, say you, than having no epochs at all. Unquestionably, yes. But the fact that a successful examination of one sort or another is the goal towards which most of our young people are labouring, with feverish haste and with undue anxiety, is one which possibly calls for the scrutiny of the investigating Why?

In the first place, people rarely accomplish beyond their own aims. The aim is a pass, not knowledge,

“they cram to pass and not to know ; they do pass and they don’t know,” says Mr. Ruskin ; and most of us who know the “candidate” will admit that there is some truth in the epigram. There are, doubtless, people who pass and who also know, but, even so, it is open to question, whether passing is the most direct, simple, natural and efficacious way of securing knowledge, or whether the persons who pass *and* know are not those keen and original minds which would get blood out of stone,—anyway, sap out of sawdust. Again—except for the fine power of resistance possessed by the human mind, which secures that most persons who go through examination grind come out as they went in, absolutely unbiassed towards any intellectual pursuits whatever—except for this, the tendency of the grind is to imperil that individuality which is the one incomparably precious birthright of each of us. The very fact of a public examination compels that all who go in for it must study on the same lines.

It will be urged that there is no necessary limitation to studies outside the examination syllabus, nor any restrictions whatever as to the direction of study even upon the syllabus ; but this is a mistake. Whatever public examinations a given school takes, the whole momentum of pupils and staff urges towards the great issue. As to the manner of study, this is ruled by the style of questions set in a given subject ; and Dry-as-dust wins the day because it is easier and fairer to give marks upon definite facts than upon mere ebullitions of fancy or genius. So it comes to pass that there is absolutely no choice as to the matter or manner of their studies for most boys and girls who go to school, nor, for many of those who work at home. For, so great is the convenience of a set

syllabus that parents and teachers are glad to avail themselves of it.

It appears then that the boy is in bondage to the schoolmaster, and the schoolmaster to the examiner, and the parents do no more than acquiesce. Would parents be astounded if they found themselves in this matter a little like the man who had talked prose all his life without knowing it? The tyranny of the competitive examination is supported for the most part by parents. We do not say altogether. Teachers do their part manfully; but, in the first place, teachers unsupported by parents have no power at all in the matter; not a single candidate could they present beyond their own sons and daughters; in the next place, we do not hesitate to say that the whole system is forced upon teachers (though, perhaps, by no means against their will) by certain ugly qualities of human nature as manifested in parents. Ignorance, idleness, vanity, avarice, do not carry a pleasant sound; and if we, who believe in parents, have the temerity to suggest such shadows to the father basking in the sunshine of his boy's success, we would add that the rest of us who are not parents are still more to blame; that it is terribly hard to run counter to the current of the hour; and that, "harm is wrought through want of thought."

Ignorance is excusable, but wilful ignorance is culpable, and the time has come for the thoughtful parent to examine himself and see whether or no it be his duty to make a stand against the competitive examination system. Observe, the evil lies in the competition, not in the examination. If the old axiom be true, that the mind can know nothing but what it can produce in the form of an answer to a question put by the mind



itself, it is relatively true that knowledge conveyed from without must needs be tested from without. Probably, work on a given syllabus tested by a final examination is *the* condition of definite knowledge and steady progress. All we contend for is that the examination shall not be competitive. It will be urged that it is unfair to rank such public examinations as the Universities' Local—which have done infinitely much to raise the standard of middle-class education, especially amongst girls, and upon which neither prize nor place depends—as competitive examinations. They are rarely competitive, it is true, in the sense of any extraneous reward to the fortunate candidate; but, happily, we are not so far gone from original righteousness but that Distinction is its own reward. The pupil is willing to labour, and rightly so, for the honour of a pass which distinguishes him among the *élite* of his school. The schools themselves compete (*con + petere* = to seek with) as to which shall send in the greatest number of candidates and come out with the greatest number of Honours, Scholarships, and what not. These distinctions are well advertised, and the parent who is on the look-out for a school for his boy is all too ready to send him where the chances of distinction are greatest. Examinations which include the whole school, and where every boy has his place on the list, higher or lower, are another thing; though these also appeal to the emulous principle, they do not do so in excess, the point to be noted.

But, why should so useful an incentive to work as a competitive examination be called in question? There are certain facts which may be predicated of every human being who is not, as the country folk say, "wanting." Every one wants to get on; whatever

place we occupy we aim at the next above it. Every one wants to get rich, or, anyway, richer ; whether the wealth he chooses to acquire be money or autographs. Every one wants the society of his fellows ; if he does not, we call him a misanthrope and say, to use another popular and telling phrase, "He's not quite right." We all want to excel, to do better than the rest, whether in a tennis-match or an examination. We all want to know, though some of us are content to know our neighbours' affairs, while others would fain know about the stars in their courses. We all, from the sergeant in his stripes to the much decorated commanding officer, want people to think well of us. Now these several desires, of power, of wealth, of society, of excelling, of knowledge, of esteem, are primary springs of action in every human being. Touch any one of them, in savage or in *savant*, and you cannot fail of a response. The Russian Moujik besieges a passing traveller with questions about the lands he has seen, because he *wants to know*. The small boy gambles with his marbles because he *wants to get*. The dairymaid dons a new bow because she *wants to be admired*, the only form of esteem to which she is awake. Tom drives when the children play horses because he *wants to rule*. Maud works herself into a fever for her examination because she *wants to excel*, and "to pass" is the hallmark of excellence, that is, of those who excel.

Now these primary desires are neither virtuous nor vicious. They are common to us all and necessary to us all, and appear to play the same part towards our spiritual being that the appetites do to our material existence ; that is, they stimulate us to the constant effort which is the condition of progress, and at the same time the condition of health. We know

how that soul stagnates which thinks nothing worth an effort. He is a poor thing who is content to be beaten on all hands. We do not quarrel with the principle of emulation any more than we do with that of respiration. The one is as natural and as necessary as the other, and as little to be brought before a moral tribunal. But it is the part of the educator to recognise that a child does not come into the world a harp with one string ; and that the perpetual play upon this one chord through all the years of adolescence is an evil, not because emulation is a vicious principle, but because the balance of character is destroyed by the constant stimulation of this one desire at the expense of the rest.

Equally strong, equally natural, equally sure of awakening a responsive stir in the young soul, is the divinely implanted principle of curiosity. The child *wants to know*: wants to know incessantly, desperately ; asks all manner of questions about everything he comes across, plagues his elders and betters, and is told not to bother, and to be a good boy and not ask questions. But this only sometimes. For the most part we lay ourselves out to answer Tommy's questions so far as we are able, and are sadly ashamed that we are so soon floored by his insatiable curiosity about natural objects and phenomena. Tommy has his reward. The most surprising educational feat accomplished amongst us is the amount of knowledge, about everything within his range, which Tommy has acquired by the end of his sixth year. "Why, he knows as much as I do, about"—this, and that, and the other, says his astonished and admiring father. Take him to the seaside, and in a week he will tell you all about trawling and mackerel fishing ; the ways of the fisher-folk, and all that his inquisitive mind can find

out unaided. He would tell all about sand, and shells, and tides, and waves, only, poor little boy, he must have help towards this manner of knowledge, and there is no one to give it to him. However, he finds out all that he can about all that he sees and hears, and does amass a surprising amount of exact knowledge about things and their properties.

When Tommy goes to school, his parents find themselves relieved of the inconvenience of his incessant Why? They are probably so well pleased to be let off that it does not occur to them to ask themselves Why Tommy no longer wonders Why? Up to this period nature has been active. She has been allowed to stimulate that one of his desires most proper to minister to his mental growth, just as, if let alone, she would give him that hearty appetite which should promote his physical growth. She has it all her own way. The desire of knowledge is that spring of action most operative in Tommy's childhood. But he goes to school. Knowledge is a pure delight to Tommy. Let his lessons approach him on the lines of his nature—not on the lines proper for certain subjects of instruction—and the little boy has no choice. He cannot help learning and loving to learn, "'cos 'tis his nature to."

This, of presenting knowledge to Tommy on the lines of his nature, is, however, a difficult and delicate task. Not every schoolmaster, any more than every parent, is keen to give Tommy what he wants in this matter of needful knowledge. So, once upon a time, let us suppose, there arose a pedagogue to whom was discovered a new and easier way. The morning had seen the poor man badly baffled by the queries of boys who *wanted to know*. How was a man, who had pretty well done with fresh studies for his own part,



to keep up with these eager intelligences. In a vision of the night it is disclosed to Cognitus that there is another and an easier way. The desire of knowledge is not the only desire active in the young bosom. Just as much as he wants to know, he wants to excel, to do better than the rest. "Every soul of them wants to be first in one way or another—first in games, if not in class." Now, Cognitus was a philosopher; he knew that, as a rule, but one desire is supremely active at one time in the breast of boy or man. Kindle their emulation, and all must needs do the same thing in the same way to see who can do it best. The boys will no longer *want to know*; they will get their due share of learning in regular ways, and really get on better than if they were moved by the restless spirit of inquiry. *Eureka!* A discovery; honour and renown for master and boys,—no need for cane or imposition, for emulation is the best of all disciplinarians,—and steady-going, quiet work, without any of the fatiguing excursions into new fields to which the craving for knowledge leads. "How pleased the parents will be, too," says Cognitus, for he knows that paternal love, now and then, looks for a little sustenance from paternal vanity, that the child who does well is dear. Nay, who knows but the far-seeing Cognitus beheld, as in a vision, the scholarships and money awards which should help to fill the pocket of Paternus, or should, any way, lessen the drain thereupon. Here, indeed, is a better way, upon which Paternus and Cognitus may well consent to walk together. Every one is happy, every one content, nobody worried, a great deal of learning got in. What would you have more? Just one thing, honoured Cognitus, that keen desire for knowledge, that same incessant *Why?* with which Tommy went to school, and which should have



kept him inquisitive about all things good and great and wise throughout the years given to him wherein to lay the groundwork of character, the years of his youth.

We cannot put our finger upon Cognitus, and are pretty sure that he arrived by a consensus of opinion, and through considerable urgency on the part of parents. No one is to blame for a condition of things which is an enormous advance upon much of what went before. Only, knowledge is advancing, and it is full time that we reconsider our educational principles and recast our methods. We absolutely must get rid of the competitive examination system if we would not be reduced to the appalling mediocrity which we see in China, for example, to have befallen an examination-ridden empire. Probably the world has never seen a finer body of educationalists than those who at the present moment man our schools, both Boys' and Girls'. But the originality, the fine initiative, of these most able men and women is practically lost. The schools are examination-ridden, and the heads can strike out no important new lines. Let us begin our efforts by believing in one another, parents in teachers and teachers in parents. Both parents and teachers have the one desire, the advance of the child along the lines of character. Both groan equally under the limitations of the present system. Let us have courage, and united and concerted action will overthrow this Juggernaut that we have made.

## CHAPTER XXI

### *HERBARTIAN PEDAGOGICS*

WE in England require, every now and then, to pull ourselves together, and to ask what they are doing on the continent in the way of education. We still hark back to the older German educational reformers. We may not know much of Comenius, Basedow, Raticz; we do know something of the reformers next in descent, Pestalozzi and Froebel; but how much do we know of the thought of Johann Friedrich Herbart, the lineal successor of these, who has largely displaced his predecessors in the field of Pedagogics.

How entirely German educators work upon Herbart, and Herbart only, is proved by the existence of a Herbartian educational literature greatly more extensive than the whole of our English educational literature put together.

A little volume on the "Outlines of Pedagogics,"\* by Professor W. Rein, of the University of Jena, is offered to us by the translators, C. C. and Ida J. Van Liew, as a brief introduction to the study of Herbart and his school, the author making due allowance for the advances that have been made in the fifty years that have elapsed since Herbart's death.

As Herbart and his interpreters represent the most advanced school of educational thought on the continent, it will, perhaps, be interesting to our readers

\* Sonnenschein & Co., 3s.

to make a slight comparison between what we call *P.N.E.U. Philosophy* and the school of thought which exercises such immense influence in Germany.

One of the most characteristic features of Herbart's thinking, and that feature of it which constitutes a new school of educational thought, is, that he rejects the notion of separate mental faculties. The earlier reformers, notably Pestalozzi and Froebel, divide the faculties up with something of the precision of a phrenologist, and a chief business of education is, according to them, "to develop the faculties." There is a certain pleasing neatness in this idea which is very attractive. We want to know, definitely, what we have to do. Why develop the perceptive faculties here, the conceptive there, the judgment in this lesson, the affections in the other, until you have covered the whole ground, giving each so-called faculty its due share of developmental exercise! But, says Herbart, we have changed all that. The mind, like Wordsworth's cloud, moves altogether when it moves at all.

Now this appears to be but a slight fundamental difference, but it is one upon the recognition of which education changes front. The whole system of beautifully organised lessons, whose object is to develop this or that, is called into question. For the *raison d'être* of specialised intellectual gymnastics is gone when we no longer recognise particular "muscles" of the mind to be developed. The aim of education must be something quite other, and, if the aim is other, the methods must be altered, for what is method but *a way to an end*. So far we are entirely with Herbart; we do not believe in the "faculties;" therefore we do not believe in the "development of the faculties;" therefore we do not regard lessons as instruments for this "develop-

ment": in fact, our whole method of procedure is altered.

Again, we are with the philosopher in his recognition of the force of an idea, and especially of those ideas which are, as we phrase it, in the air at any given moment. "Both the circle of the family and that of social intercourse are subjected to forces that are active in the entire social body, and that penetrate the entire atmosphere of human life in invisible channels. No one knows whence these currents, these ideas arise; but they are there. They influence the moods, the aspirations, and the inclinations of humanity, and no one however powerful can withdraw himself from their effects; no sovereign's command makes its way into their depths. They are often born of a genius to be seized upon by the multitude that soon forgets their author; then the power of the thought that has thus become active in the masses again impels the individual to energetic resolutions: in this manner it is constantly describing a remarkable circle. Originating with those that are highly gifted, these thoughts permeate all society, reaching, in fact, not only its adult members, but also through these its youth, and appearing again in other highly gifted individuals in whom they will perhaps have been elevated to a definite form.

"Whether the power of these dominant ideas is greater in the individual, or in the body of individuals as a whole, is a matter of indifference here. Be that as it may, it cannot be denied that their effect upon the one is manifested in a reciprocal action upon the other, and that their influence upon the younger generation is indisputable."

We entirely agree that no one can escape the influence of this *Zeitgeist*, and that the *Zeitgeist* is,

in fact, one of the most powerful of the occult educational influences, and one which parents and all who have the training of children will do well to reckon with in the adjustment of their work.

Nature, family, social intercourse, this Zeitgeist, the Church and the State, thus Professor Rein, as interpreting Herbart, "sums up the schoolmasters under whose influences every child grows up; a suggestive enumeration we should do well to consider. "*Erziehung ist Sache der Familien; von da geht sie aus und dahin kehrt sie grösstenteils zurück,*" says Herbart. He considers, as do we, that by far the most valuable part of education is carried on in the family, because of the union of all the members under a common parentage, of the feeling of dependence upon a head, of the very intimate knowledge to be gained of the younger members.

"The members of the family look confidently to the head; and this sense of dependence favours, at the same time, the proper reception of that which is dearest to mankind, namely, the religious feeling. If the life of the family is permeated by a noble piety, a sincere religious faith will take root in the hearts of the children. Faithful devotion to the guide of the youth also calls forth faithful devotion to Him who controls human destinies—a thought which Herbart expresses so beautifully in the words—'To the child, the family should be the symbol of the order in the world; from the parents one should derive by idealisation the characteristics of the deity.'"

This idea of all education springing from and resting upon our relation to Almighty God is one which we of the P.N.E.U. have ever laboured to enforce. We take a very distinct stand upon this point. We



do not merely give a *religious* education, because that would seem to imply the possibility of some other education, a secular education, for example. But we hold that all education is divine, that every good gift of knowledge and insight comes from above, that the Lord the Holy Spirit is the supreme educator of mankind, and that the culmination of all education (which may, at the same time, be reached by a little child) is that personal knowledge of and intimacy with the Supreme, in which our being finds its fullest perfection. We hold, in fact, that noble conception of education held by the mediæval church, as pictured upon the walls of the Spanish chapel in Florence. Here we have represented the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Twelve, and directly under them, fully under the illuminating rays, are the noble figures of the seven liberal arts, Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Music, Astronomy, Geometry, Arithmetic, and under these again the men who received and expressed, so far as we know, the initial idea in each of these subjects; such men as Pythagoras, Zoroaster, Euclid, whom we might call pagans, but whom the earlier Church recognised as divinely taught and illuminated.

Here follows a passage which we do more than endorse, for it contains the very *raison d'être* of our society. "The education of the children will always remain the holiest and highest of all family duties. The welfare, civilisation, and culture of a people depend essentially upon the degree of success that attends the education in the homes. The family principle is the point at which both the religious and educational life of a people centres, and about which it revolves. It is a force in comparison with which every sovereign's command appears powerless."

By the way, we are inclined to think that Dr. Rein's mention of Rousseau is a little misleading. It is true that in "Emil" the parents are supplanted, but, notwithstanding that fact, perhaps no other educationalist has done so much to awaken parents to their great work as educators. After investigating the conditions of home training, Dr. Rein proceeds to a discussion of schools (*a*) as they exist in Germany—(*b*) as they exist in his own ideal, a discussion which should be most interesting to parents.

Teleology, *i.e.*, the theory of the purpose of education, falls next under discussion in an extremely instructive chapter. It is well we should know the vast uncertainty which exists on this fundamental point. As a matter of fact, few of us know definitely what we propose to ourselves in the education of our children. We do not know what it is possible to effect, and, as a man does not usually compass more than he aims at, the results of our education are very inadequate and unsatisfactory.

"Shall the educator follow Rousseau and educate a man of nature in the midst of civilised men? In so doing, as Herbart has shown, we should simply repeat from the beginning the entire series of evils that have already been surmounted. Or shall we turn to Locke and prepare the pupil for the world which is customarily in league with worldlings? We should then arrive at the standpoint of Basedow, and aim to educate the pupil so that he would become a truly useful member of human society. Of course we should always be harassed with the secret doubt as to whether this is the ideal purpose after all, and whether we are not at times directly enjoined to place the pupil at variance with the usage and customary dealings of the world. If we reflect that an endless career

is open to man for his improvement, we realise that only that education, whose aims are always the highest, can hope to reach the lofty goals that mark this career.

“Therefore an ideal aim must be present in the mind of the educator. Possibly he can obtain information and help from Pestalozzi, whose nature evinced such ideal tendencies. Pestalozzi wished the welfare of mankind to be sought in the harmonious cultivation of *all* powers. If one only knew what is to be understood by a multiplicity of mental powers, and what is meant by the *harmony* of various powers. These phrases sound very attractive, but give little satisfaction. The purely *formal* aims of education will appeal just as little to the educator: ‘Educate the pupil to independence;’ or, ‘educate the pupil to be his own educator;’ or, ‘educate the pupil so that it will become better than its educator.’ (Hermann and Dorothea, Hector and Astyanax in the Iliad). Such and similar attempts to fix the purpose of education are abundant in the history of pedagogy; but they do not bring us nearer the goal. In their formal character they do not say, for example, of what kind the independence shall be, what content it shall have, what aims it shall have in view, or in what directions its course shall lie. For the pupil that has become independent can use his freedom rightly for good just as well as misuse it for evil.”

Herbart’s own theory of education, so far as we may venture to formulate it, is strictly ethical as opposed to intellectual, that is, the development and sustenance of the intellect is of secondary importance to the educator for two reasons: character building is the matter of first importance to human beings; and this because, (*a*) train character and intellectual

“development” largely takes care of itself, and (b) the lessons designed for intellectual culture have high ethical value, whether stimulating or disciplinary. This is familiar ground to us: we too have taught, in season and out of season, that the formation of character is the aim of the educator. So far, we are at one with the philosopher; but, may we venture to say it, we have arrived, through the study of Physiology, at the definiteness of aim which he desires but does not reach. We must appeal, he says, to Psychology, but then, he adds, “of course we cannot expect a concordant answer from all psychologists; and in view of the obscurity which still prevails in this sphere, the different views as to the nature of the human soul and the extraordinary difficulty with which the empirical method of investigation meets, an absolutely indubitable explanation can hardly be expected.”

This is doubtless true of Psychology alone; but of Psychology illuminated by Physiology we have another tale to tell. It is the study of that border-land betwixt mind and matter, the brain, which yields the richest results to the educator. For the brain is the seat of habit: the culture of habit is, to a certain extent, physical culture: the discipline of habit is at least a third part of the great whole which we call education, and here we feel that the physical science of to-day has placed us far in advance of the great philosopher of fifty years ago. We hold with him entirely as to the importance of great formative ideas in the education of children, but, we add to our ideas, habits, and we labour to form habits upon a physical basis. Character is the result not merely of the great ideas which are given to us, but of the habits which we labour to form *upon those ideas*. We recognise

both principles and the result is a wide range of possibilities in education, practical methods, and a definite aim. We labour to produce a human being at his best physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually, with the enthusiasms of religion, the good life, of nature, of knowledge, of art and of manual work; and we do *not* labour in the dark.



## CHAPTER XXII

### *THE TEACHING OF THE "PARENTS' NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION"*

#### PART I

ONE of Mr. Matthew Arnold's discriminating utterances may help us in the effort to define anew the scope and the methods of education. In "A French Eton" (page 61) he says:—"The education of each class in society has, or ought to have, its ideal, determined by the wants of that class, and by its destination. Society may be imagined so uniform that one education shall be suitable for all its members; we have not a society of that kind, nor has any European country. . . . Looking at English society at this moment, one may say that the ideal for the education of each of its classes to follow, the aim which the education of each should particularly endeavour to reach, is different."

This remark helps us to define our position. We lay no claim to original ideas or methods. We cannot choose but profit by the work of the great educators. Such men as Locke and Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel, have left us an inheritance of educational thought which we must needs enter upon.

Our work is selective, but not merely so. We are progressive. We take what former thinkers have left us, and go on from there.

For example, in this matter of class differentiation,

we believe we have scientific grounds for a line of our own. The Fathers (why should we not have Fathers in education as well as in theology?) worked out, for the most part, their educational thought with an immediate view to the children of the poor. Because the children that he had to deal with had a limited vocabulary, and untrained observing powers, Pestalozzi taught them to see and then to say: "I see a hole in the carpet. I see a small hole in the carpet. I see a small round hole in the carpet. I see a small round hole with a black edge in the carpet," and so on; and it is very easy to see how good such training would be for such children. But what is the case with the children we have to deal with? We believe to-day on scientific grounds in the doctrine of heredity, and certainly in this matter experience supports our faith.

*Punch* has hit off the state of the case: "Come and see the puff-puff, dear." "Do you mean the *locomotive*, grandmamma?" As a matter of fact, the child of four and five has a wider, more exact vocabulary in everyday use, than that employed by his elders and betters, and is constantly adding to this vocabulary with surprising quickness; *ergo*, to give a child of this class a vocabulary is no part of direct education. Again, we know that nothing escapes the keen scrutiny of the little people. It is not their perceptive powers we have to train, but the habit of methodical observation and accurate record.

Generations of physical toil do not tend to foster imagination. How good, then, for the children of the working classes to have games initiated for them, to be carried through little dramatic plays until, perhaps, in the end they will be able to invent such little dramas for themselves!

But the children of the cultured classes—why, surely their danger is rather to live too much in realms of fancy. A single sentence in lesson or talk, the slightest sketch of an historical character, and they will play at it for a week, inventing endless incidents. Like Tennyson, when he was a child, they will carry on the story of the siege and defence of a castle (represented by a mound, with sticks for its garrison) for weeks together, and a child engrossed with these larger interests feels a sensible loss of dignity when he flaps his wings as a pigeon or skips about as a lamb, though, no doubt, he will do these things with pleasure for the teacher he loves. Imagination is ravenous for food, not pining for culture, in the children of educated parents, and education need not concern herself directly, for them, with the development of the conceptive powers. Then with regard to the cultivated child's reasoning powers, most parents have had experiences of this kind—Tommy is five. His mother had occasion to talk to him about the Atlantic Cable, and said she did not know how it was insulated; Tommy remarked next morning that he had been thinking about it, and perhaps the water itself was an insulator. So far from needing to develop their children's reasoning powers, most parents say—"Oh, wad the gods the giftie gie us"—to answer the everlasting 'why' of the intelligent child.

In a word, to develop the child's so-called faculties is the main work of education when *ignorant* or otherwise *deficient* children are concerned; but the children of educated people are never *ignorant* in this sense. They awake to the world all agog for knowledge, and with keen-edged

faculties ; therefore the principle of heredity causes us to recast our idea of the office of education, and to recognise that the child of intelligent parents is born with an inheritance of self-developing faculties.

Thus education naturally divides itself into education for the children of *lettered*, and education for the children of *unlettered* parents. In fact, this class question, which we are all anxious to evade in common life, comes practically into force in education. It is absolutely necessary to individualise and say, this part of education is the most important for *this* child, or *this* class, but may be relegated into a lower place for another child or another class.

If science limits our range of work as regards the development of so-called faculties, it extends it in equal measure with regard to habit. Here we have no new doctrine to proclaim. "One custom overcometh another," said Thomas à Kempis, and that is all we have to say ; only physiologists have made clear to us the *rationale* of this law of habit. We know that to form in his child right habits of thinking and behaving is a parent's chief duty, and that this can be done for every child definitely and within given limits of time. But this question has been already dealt with, and we need do no more than remind parents of what they already know.

To nourish a child daily with loving, right, and noble ideas we believe to be the parent's next duty. The child having once received the Idea will assimilate it in his own way, and work it into the fabric of his life ; and a single sentence from his mother's lips may give him a bent that will make him, or may tend to make him, painter or poet, statesman or philanthropist. The object of lessons

should be in the main twofold: to train a child in certain mental habits, as attention, accuracy, promptness, &c., and to nourish him with ideas which may bear fruit in his life.

There are other educational principles which we bear in mind and work out, but for the moment it is worth while for us to concentrate our thought upon the fact that one of our objects is to accentuate the importance of education under the two heads of the *formation of habits* and the *presentation of ideas*, and as a corollary to recognise that the *development of faculties* is not a supreme object with the cultivated classes, because this is work which has been done for their children in a former generation.

But how does all this work? Is it practical? Is it the question of to-day? It must needs be practical because it gives the fullest recognition to the two principles of human nature, the *material*, and the *spiritual*. We are ready to concede all that the most advanced biologist would ask of us. Does he say, "Thought is only a mode of motion?" if so, we are not dismayed. We know that ninety-nine out of a hundred thoughts that pass through our minds are involuntary, the inevitable result of those modifications of the brain tissue which habit has set up. The mean man thinks mean thoughts, the magnanimous man great thoughts, because we all think as we are accustomed to think, and Physiology shows us why. On the other hand, we recognise that greater is the spirit within us than the matter which it governs. Every habit has its beginning. The beginning is the *idea* which comes with a stir and takes possession of us. The *idea* is the motive power of life, and it is because we recognise the spiritual potency of the *idea* that we are able to bow reverently



before the fact that God the Holy Spirit is Himself the Supreme Educator, dealing with each of us severally in the things we call sacred and those we call secular. We lay ourselves open to the spiritual impact of ideas whether these be conveyed by the printed page, the human voice, or whether they reach us without visible sign.

But ideas may be evil or may be good; and to choose between the ideas that present themselves is, as we have been taught, the one responsible work of a human being. It is the power of choice that we would give our children. We ask ourselves "Is there any fruitful idea underlying this or that study that the children are engaged in?" We divest ourselves of the notion that to develop the faculties is the chief thing, and a "subject" which does not rise out of some great thought of life we usually reject as not nourishing, not fruitful; while we usually, but not invariably, retain those studies which give exercise in habits of clear and orderly thinking. We have some gymnastics of the mind whose object is to exercise what we call faculties as well as to train in the habit of clear and ordered thinking. Mathematics, grammar, logic, &c., are not purely disciplinary; they do develop, if a bull may be allowed us, intellectual muscle. We by no means reject the familiar staples of education, in the school sense, but we prize them even more for the record of intellectual habits they leave in the brain tissue than for their distinct value in developing certain "faculties." Thus our first thought with regard to Nature-knowledge is that the child should have a living personal acquaintance with the things he sees. It concerns us more that he should know bistort from persicaria, hawkweed from dandelion, and

where to find this and that, and how it looks, living and growing, than that he should talk learnedly about *epigynous* and *hypogynous*. All this is well in its place, but should come quite late, after the child has seen and studied the living growing thing *in situ*, and has copied colour and gesture as best he can.

So of object lessons, we are not anxious to develop his observing powers on little bits of everything which he shall describe as opaque, brittle, malleable, and so on. We would prefer not to take the edge off his curiosity in this way; we should rather leave him receptive and respectful for one of those opportunities for asking questions and engaging in talk with his parents about the lock in the river, the mowing machine, the ploughed field, which offer real seed to the mind of a child, and never make him a priggish little person able to tell all about it.

Once more, we know that there is a storehouse of thought wherein we may find all the great ideas that have moved the world. We are above all things anxious to give the child the key to this storehouse.

The education of the day, it is said, does not produce *reading* people. We are determined that the children shall love books, therefore we do not interpose ourselves between the book and the child. We read him his Tanglewood Tales, and when he is a little older his Plutarch, not trying too much to break up or water down, but leaving the child's mind to deal with the matter as it can. We endeavour that all our teaching and treatment of children shall be on the lines of nature, *their* nature and ours, for we do not recognise what is called "Child-nature." We believe that children are human beings at their best and sweetest but also at their weakest and least wise.

We are careful not to water down life for them but to present such portions to them in such quantities as they can readily receive. In a word we are very tenacious of the dignity and individuality of our children. We recognise steady, regular growth with no *transition* stage. This teaching is up to date, but it is as old as common sense. Our claim is that our common sense rests on a basis of Physiology, that we show a reason for all that we do, and that we recognise "the science of the proportion of things," put the first thing foremost, do not take too much upon ourselves, but leave time and scope for the workings of nature and of a higher Power than nature herself.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### *THE TEACHING OF THE PARENTS' NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION*

#### PART II

As the philosophy which underlies any educational or social scheme is really the vital part of that scheme, it may be well to set forth, however meagrely, some fragments of P.N.E.U. Philosophy.

We believe—

That disposition, intellect, genius, come pretty much by nature.

That *character* is an achievement, the one practical achievement possible to us for ourselves and for our children.

That all real advance, in family or individual, or nation, is along the lines of character.

That, therefore, to direct and assist the evolution of character is the chief office of education.

But perhaps we shall clear the ground better by throwing a little of the teaching of the Union into categorical form :—

What is character ?

The resultant or residuum of conduct.

That is to say, a man is what he has made himself by the thoughts in which he has allowed himself, the words he has spoken, the deeds he has done.

How does conduct itself originate ?

Commonly, in our habitual modes of thought. We

think as we are accustomed to think, and, therefore, act as we are accustomed to act.

What, again, is the origin of these habits of thought and act?

Commonly, inherited disposition. The man who is generous, obstinate, hot-tempered, devout, is so, on the whole, because that strain of character runs in his family.

Are there any means of modifying inherited dispositions?

Yes; marriage, for the race; education, for the individual.

How may a bad habit which has its rise in an inherited disposition be corrected?

By the contrary good habit: as Thomas à Kempis has said, "One custom overcometh another."

Trace the genesis of a habit.

Every act proceeds from a thought. Every thought modifies somewhat the material structure of the brain. That is, the nerve substance of the brain forms itself to the manner of thoughts we think. The habit of act arises from the habit of thought. The person who thinks, "Oh, it will do;" "Oh, it doesn't matter," forms a habit of negligent and imperfect work.

How may such habit be corrected?

By introducing the contrary line of thought, which will lead to contrary action. "This *must* be done well, because——"

Is it enough to think such thought once?

No; the stimulus of the new idea must be applied until it is, so to speak, at home in the brain, and arises involuntarily.

What do you mean by involuntary thought?

The brain is at work unceasingly, is always think-



ing, or rather is always being acted upon by thought, as the keys of an instrument by the fingers of a player.

Is the person aware of all the thoughts that the brain elaborates ?

No ; only of those which are new and "striking." The old familiar "way of thinking" beats in the brain without the consciousness of the thinker.

What name is given to this unconscious thought ?

Unconscious (or involuntary) cerebration.

Why is it important to the educator ?

Because most of our actions spring from thoughts of which we are not conscious, or, anyway, which are involuntary.

Is there any means of altering the trend of unconscious cerebration ?

Yes ; by diverting it into a new channel.

The "unconscious cerebration" of the greedy child runs upon cakes and sweetmeats : how may this be corrected ?

By introducing a new idea—the pleasure of giving pleasure with these good things, for example.

Is the greedy child capable of receiving such new idea ?

Most certainly ; because benevolence, the desire of benefiting others, is one of those springs of action in every human being that need only to be touched to make them act.

Give an example of this fact.

Mungo Park, dying of thirst, hunger, and weariness in an African desert, found himself in the vicinity of a cannibal tribe. He gave himself up for lost, but a woman of the tribe found him, took compassion on him, brought him milk, hid him, and nourished him until he was restored and could take care of himself.

Are there any other springs of action which may be touched with effect in every human being ?

Yes, such as the desire of knowledge, of society, of distinction, of wealth ; friendship, gratitude, and many more. Indeed, it is not possible to incite a human being to any sort of good and noble conduct but you touch a responsive spring.

How, then, can human beings do amiss ?

Because the good feelings have their opposite bad feelings, springs which also await a touch. Malevolence is opposed to benevolence. It is easy to imagine that the unstable savage woman might have been amongst the first to devour the man she cherished, had one of her tribe given an impulse to the springs of hatred within her.

In view of these internal impulses, what is the duty of the educator ?

To make himself acquainted with the springs of action in a human being, and to touch them with such wisdom, tenderness and moderation that the child is insensibly led into the habits of the good life.

Name some of these habits.

Diligence, reverence, gentleness, truthfulness, promptness, neatness, courtesy ; in fact, the virtues and graces which belong to persons who have been "well brought up."

Is it enough to stimulate a spring of action—say, curiosity, or the desire of knowledge, once in order to secure a habit ?

No ; the stimulus must be repeated, and action upon it secured over and over many times before a habit is formed.

What common error do people make about the formation of habits ?

They allow lapses ; they train a child to “ shut the door after him ” twenty times, and allow him to leave it open the twenty-first.

With what result ?

That the work has to be done over again, because the growth of brain tissue to the new habit (the forming of cell-connections) has been disturbed. The result would appear to be much the same as when the flesh-forming process which knits up a wound is disturbed.

Then the educator should “ time ” himself in forming habits ? How long may it take to cure a bad habit, and form the contrary good one ?

Perhaps a month or six weeks of careful incessant treatment may be enough.

But such treatment requires an impossible amount of care and watchfulness on the part of the educator ?

Yes ; but not more than is given to the cure of any bodily disease — measles, or scarlet fever, for example.

Then the thoughts and actions of a human being may be regulated mechanically, so to speak, by setting up the right nerve currents in the brain ?

This is true only so far as it is true to say that the keys of a piano produce music.

But the thoughts, which may be represented by the fingers of the player, do they not also run their course without the consciousness of the thinker ?

They do ; not merely vague, inconsequent musings, but thoughts which follow each other with more or less logical sequence, according to the previous training of the thinker.

Would you illustrate this ?

Mathematicians have been known to think out abstruse problems in their sleep ; the bard improvises,

authors "reel off" without premeditation, without any deliberate intention to write such and such things. The thoughts follow each other according to the habit of thinking previously set up in the brain of the thinker.

Is it that the thoughts go round and round a subject like a horse in a mill?

No; the horse is rather drawing a carriage along the same high road, but into ever new developments of the landscape.

In this light, the important thing is how you *begin* to think on any subject?

Precisely so; the initial thought or suggestion touches as it were the spring which sets in motion a possibly endless succession or train of ideas; thoughts which are, so to speak, elaborated in the brain almost without the consciousness of the thinker.

Are these thoughts, or successive ideas, random, or do they make for any conclusion?

They make for the logical conclusion which should follow the initial idea.

Then the reasoning power may be set to work involuntarily?

Yes; the sole concern of this power is, apparently, to work out the rational conclusion from any idea presented to it.

But surely this power of arriving at logical rational conclusions almost unconsciously is the result of education, most likely of generations of culture?

It exists in greater or less degree according as it is disciplined and exercised; but it is by no means the result of education as the word is commonly understood: witness the following anecdote:\*

"When Captain Head was travelling across the

\* From Archbishop Thompson's *Laws of Thought*.

Pampas of South America, his guide one day suddenly stopped him, and, pointing high into the air, cried out, 'A lion!' Surprised at such an exclamation, accompanied with such an act, he turned up his eyes, and with difficulty perceived, at an immeasurable height, a flight of condors soaring in circles in a particular spot. Beneath this spot, far out of sight of himself or guide, lay the carcass of a horse, and over this carcass stood, as the guide well knew, a lion, whom the condors were eyeing with envy from their airy height. The sight of the birds was to him what the sight of the lion alone would have been to the traveller, a full assurance of its existence. Here was an act of thought which cost the thinker no trouble, which was as easy to him as to cast his eyes upward, yet which from us, unaccustomed to the subject, would require many steps and some labour."

Then is what is called "the reason" innate in human beings?

Yes, it is innate, and is exercised without volition by all, but gains in power and precision, according as it is cultivated.

If the reason, especially the trained reason, arrives at the right conclusion without any effort of volition on the part of the thinker, it is practically an infallible guide to conduct?

On the contrary, the reason is pledged to pursue a suggestion to its logical conclusion only. Much of the history of religious persecutions and of family and international feuds turns on the confusion which exists in most minds between that which is logically inevitable and that which is morally right.

But according to this doctrine any theory whatever may be shown to be logically inevitable?

Exactly so; the initial idea once received, the



difficulty is, not to prove that it is tenable, but to restrain the mind from proving that it is so.

Can you illustrate this point ?

The child who lets himself be jealous of his brother is almost startled by the flood of convincing proofs that he does well to be angry, which rush in upon him. Beginning with a mere flash of suspicion in the morning, the little Cain finds himself in the evening possessed of irrefragable proofs that his brother is unjustly preferred to him : and

“ All seems infected that the infected spy  
As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.”

But supposing it is true that the child has cause for jealousy ?

Given, the starting idea, and his reason is equally capable of proving a logical certainty, whether it is true or whether it is not true.

Is there any historical proof of this startling theory ?

Perhaps every failure in conduct, in individuals, and in nations, is due to the confusion which exists as to that which is logically right, as established by the reason, and that which is morally right, as established by external law.

Is any such distinction recognised in the Bible ?

Distinctly so ; the *transgressors* of the Bible are those who do that which is *right* in their own eyes — that is, that of which their reason approves. Modern thought considers, on the contrary, that all men are justified in doing that which is right in their own eyes, acting “ up to their lights,” “ obeying the dictates of their reason.”

For example ?

A mother whose cruel usage had caused the death of her child was morally exonerated lately in a court

of justice because she acted "from a mistaken sense of duty."

But it is not possible to err from a mistaken sense of duty?

Not only possible, but inevitable, if a man accept his "own reason" as his lawgiver and judge. Take a test case, the case of the superlative crime that has been done upon the earth. There can be no doubt that the persons who caused the death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ acted under a mistaken sense of duty. "It is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not," said, most reasonably, those patriotic leaders of the Jews; and they relentlessly hunted to death this Man whose ascendancy over the common people and whose whispered claims to kingship were full of elements of danger to the subject race. "They know not what they do," He said, Who is the Truth.

All this may be of importance to philosophers; but what has it to do with the bringing up of children?

It is time we reverted to the teaching of Socrates. "Know thyself," exhorted the wise man, in season and out of season; and it will be well with us when we understand that to acquaint a child with himself—what he is as a human being—is a great part of education.

It is difficult to see why; surely much harm comes of morbid introspection?

Introspection is morbid or diseased when the person imagines that all which he finds within him is peculiar to him as an individual. To know what is common to all men is a sound cure for unhealthy self-contemplation.

How does it work?

To recognise the limitations of the reason is a safe-

guard in all the duties and relations of life. The man who knows that loyalty is his first duty in every relation, and that if he admit doubting, grudging, unlovely thoughts, he cannot possibly be loyal, because such thoughts once admitted will prove themselves to be right and fill the whole field of thought, why, he is on his guard, and writes up "no admittance" to every manner of mistrustful fancy.

That rule of life should affect the Supreme relationship?

Truly, yes; if a man will admit no beginning of mistrustful surmise concerning his father and mother, his child and his wife, shall he do so of Him who is more than they, and more than all, the "Lord of his heart"? "Loyalty forbids" is the answer to every questioning of His truth that would intrude.

But when others, whom you must needs revere, question and tell you of their "honest doubt"?

You know the history of their doubt, and can take it for what it is worth—its origin in the suggestion, which, once admitted, must needs reach a logical conclusion even to the bitter end. "Take heed that ye *enter* not into temptation," He said, Who needed not that any should tell Him, for He knew what was in men.

If man is the creature of those habits he forms with care or allows in negligence, if his very thoughts are involuntary and his conclusions inevitable, he ceases to be a free agent. One might as well concede at once that "thought is a mode of motion," and cease to regard man as a spiritual being capable of self-regulation!

It is hardly possible to concede too wide a field to biological research, if we keep well to the front the fact, that man is a spiritual being whose material

organs act in obedience to spiritual suggestion ; that, for example, as the hand writes, so the brain thinks, in obedience to suggestions.

Is the suggestion self originated ?

Probably not ; it would appear that, as the material life is sustained upon its appropriate food from without, so the immaterial life is sustained upon *its* food, —ideas or suggestions spiritually conveyed.

May the words “idea” and “suggestion” be used as synonymous terms ?

Only in so far as that ideas convey suggestions to be effected in acts.

What part does the man himself play in the reception of this immaterial food ?

It is as though one stood on the threshold to admit or reject the viands which should sustain the family.

Is this free-will in the reception or rejection of ideas the limit of man’s responsibility in the conduct of his life ?

Probably it is ; for an idea once received must run its course, unless it be superseded by another idea, in the reception of which volition is again exercised.

How do ideas originate ?

They appear to be spiritual emanations from spiritual beings ; thus, one man conveys to another the idea which is a very part of himself.

Is the intervention of a bodily presence necessary for the transmission of an idea ?

By no means ; ideas may be conveyed through picture or printed page ; absent friends would appear to communicate ideas without the intervention of means ; natural objects convey ideas, but, perhaps, the initial idea in this case may always be traced to another mind.

Then the spiritual sustenance of ideas is derived directly or indirectly from other human beings ?

No ; and here is the great recognition which the educator is called upon to make. God, the Holy Spirit, is Himself the supreme Educator of mankind.

How ?

He openeth man's ear morning by morning, to hear so much of the best as the man is able to bear.

Are the ideas suggested by the Holy Spirit confined to the sphere of the religious life ?

No ; Coleridge, speaking of Columbus and the discovery of America, ascribes the origin of great inventions and discoveries to the fact that "certain ideas of the natural world are presented to minds, already prepared to receive them, by a higher Power than Nature herself."

Is there any teaching in the Bible to support this view ?

Yes ; very much. Isaiah, for example, says that the ploughman knows how to carry on the successive operations of husbandry, "for his God doth instruct him and doth teach him."

Are all ideas which have a purely spiritual origin ideas of good ?

Unhappily, no ; it is the sad experience of mankind that suggestions of evil also are spiritually conveyed.

What is the part of the man ?

To choose the good and refuse the evil.

Does this doctrine of ideas as the spiritual food needful to sustain the immaterial life throw any light on the doctrines of the Christian religion ?

Yes ; the Bread of Life, the Water of Life, the Word by which man lives, the "meat to eat which ye know not of," and much more, cease to be figurative expressions, except that we must use the



same words to name the corporeal and the incorporeal sustenance of man. We understand, moreover, how suggestions emanating from our Lord and Saviour, which are of His essence, are the spiritual meat and drink of His believing people. We find it no longer a "hard saying," nor a dark saying, that we must sustain our spiritual selves upon Him, even as our bodies upon bread.

What practical bearing upon the educator has this doctrine of ideas ?

He knows that it is his part to place before the child daily nourishment of ideas ; that he may give the child the right initial idea in every study, and respecting each relation and duty of life ; above all, he recognises the divine co-operation in the direction, teaching, and training of the child.

How would you summarise the functions of education ?

Education is a discipline—that is, the discipline of the good habits in which the child is trained. Education is a life, nourished upon ideas ; and education is an atmosphere—that is, the child breathes the atmosphere emanating from his parents ; that of the ideas which rule their own lives.

What part do lessons and the general work of the schoolroom play in education thus regarded ?

They should afford opportunity for the discipline of many good habits, and should convey to the child such initial ideas of interest in his various studies as to make the pursuit of knowledge on those lines an object in life and a delight to him.

What duty lies upon parents and others who regard education thus seriously, as a lever by means of which character may be elevated, almost indefinitely ?

Perhaps it is incumbent upon them to make con-

scientific endeavours to further all means used to spread the views they hold; believing that there is such "progress in character and virtue" possible to the redeemed human race as has not yet been realised, or even imagined. "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life." \*

\* Matthew Arnold.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### WHENCE AND WHITHER

#### PART I

“THE P.N.E.U. goes on,” an observer writes, “without puff or fuss, by its own inherent force;” and it is making singularly rapid progress. At the present moment not less than ten thousand children of thinking, educated parents, are being brought up, more or less consciously and definitely, upon the line of the Union. Parents who read the *Parents’ Review*, or other literature of the Society, parents who belong to our various branches, or our other agencies, parents who are influenced by these parents, are becoming multitudinous; and all have one note in common,—the ardour of persons working out inspiring ideas.

It is hardly possible to over-estimate the force of this league of educated parents. When we think of the part that the children being brought up under these influences will one day play in the leading and ruling of the land, we are solemnised with the sense of a great responsibility, and it behoves us to put to ourselves, once again, the two searching queries by which every movement should, from time to time, be adjudged,—Whence? and Whither?

*Whence?* The man who is satisfied with his dwelling-place has no wish to move, and the mere

fact of a "movement" is a declaration that we are not satisfied, and that we are definitely on our way to some other ends than those commonly accepted. In one respect only we venture boldly to hark back. Exceedingly fine men and women were brought up by our grandfathers and grandmothers, even by our mothers and fathers, and the wise and old amongst us, though they look on with great sympathy, yet have an unexpressed feeling that men and women were made on the old lines of a stamp which we shall find it hard to improve upon. This was no mere chance result, nor did it come out of the spelling-book or the Pinnock's Catechisms which we have long ago consigned to the limbo they deserve.

The teaching of the old days was as bad as it could be, the training was haphazard work, reckless alike of physiology and psychology; but our grandfathers and grandmothers had one saving principle, which, for the last two or three decades, we have been, of set purpose, labouring to lose. They, of the older generation, recognised children as reasonable beings, persons of mind and conscience like themselves, but needing their guidance and control, as having neither knowledge nor experience. Witness the queer old children's books which have come down to us; before all things, these addressed children as reasonable, intelligent and responsible (terribly responsible!) persons. This fairly represents the note of home-life in the last generation. So soon as the baby realised his surroundings, he found himself a morally and intellectually responsible person. Now one of the secrets of power in dealing with our fellow beings is, to understand that human nature does that which it is expected to do and is that which it is expected to be.

We do not mean, *believed* to do and to be, with the fond and foolish faith which Mrs. Hardcastle bestowed on her dear Tony Lumpkin. Expectation strikes another chord, the chord of "*I am, I can, I ought,*" which must vibrate in every human breast, for, "'tis our nature to." The capable, dependable men and women whom we all know were reared upon this principle.

But now? Now, many children in many homes are still brought up on the old lines, but not with quite the unfaltering certitude of the old times. Other thoughts are in the air. A baby is a huge oyster (says one eminent psychologist) whose business is to feed, and to sleep, and to grow. Even Professor Sully, in his most delightful book,\* is torn in two. The children have conquered him, have convinced him beyond doubt that they are as ourselves, only more so. But then he is an evolutionist, and feels himself pledged to accommodate the child to the principles of evolution. Therefore, the little person is supposed to go through a thousand stages of moral and intellectual development, leading him from the condition of the savage or ape to that of the intelligent and cultivated human being. If children will not accommodate themselves pleasantly to this theory, why, that is their fault, and Professor Sully is too true a child-lover not to give us the children as they are, with little interludes of the theory upon which they ought to evolve. Now we have absolutely no theory to advance, and are, on scientific grounds, disposed to accept the theories of the evolutionary psychologists. But facts are too strong for us. When we consider the enormous intellectual labour the infant goes through during his first year in accommo-

\* "*Studies of Childhood,*" by Professor Sully (*Longmans, 10s. 6d.*).



dating himself to the conditions of a new world, in learning to discern between far and near, solid and flat, large and small, and a thousand other qualifications and limitations of this perplexing world, why, we are not surprised that John Stuart Mill should be well on in his Greek at five; that Arnold at three should know all the Kings and Queens of England by their portraits; or that a musical baby should have an extensive repertoire of the musical classics.

We were once emphasising the fact that every child could learn to speak two languages at once with equal facility, when a gentleman in the audience stated that he had a son who was a missionary in Bagdad, married to a German lady, and their little son of three expressed all he had to say with equal fluency in three languages—German, English, and Arabic, using each in speaking to those persons whose language it was. “Nana, which does God love best, little girls or little boys?” said a meditative little girl of four. “Oh, little girls, to be sure,” said Nana, with a good-natured wish to please. “Then if God loves little girls best, why was not God Himself a little girl?” Which of us who have reached the later stages of evolution would have hit upon a more conclusive argument? If the same little girl asked on another occasion, watching the blackbirds at the cherries: “Nana, if the bees make honey, do the birds make jam?” it was by no means an inane question, and only proves that we older persons are dull and inappreciative of such mysteries of nature as that bees should make honey.

This is how we find children—with intelligence more acute, logic more keen, observing powers more alert, moral sensibilities more quick, love and faith and hope more abounding; in fact, in all points like as we are,

only much more so, but absolutely ignorant of the world and its belongings, of us and our ways, and, above all, of how to control and direct and manifest the infinite possibilities with which they are born.

Our conception of a child rules our relations towards him. *Pour s'amuser* is the rule of child-life proper for the "oyster" theory, and most of our children's books and many of our theories of child-education are based upon this rule. "Oh! he's so happy," we say, and are content, believing that if he is happy he will be good; and it is so to a great extent; but in the older days the theory was, if you are good you will be happy; and this is a principle which strikes the keynote of endeavour, and holds good, not only through the childish "stage of evolution," but for the whole of life, here and hereafter. The child who has learned to "endeavour himself" (as the Prayer Book has it) has learned to live.

If our conception of *Whence?* as regards the child, as of—

"A Being, breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller betwixt life and death,"—

is old, that of our grandfathers; our conception of the aims and methods of education, is new, only made possible within the very last decades of the century; because it rests one foot upon the latest advances in the science of Biology and the other upon the potent secret of these latter days, that matter is the all-serviceable agent of spirit, and that spirit forms, moulds, is absolute lord, over matter, as capable of affecting the material convolutions of the brain as of influencing what used to be called the heart.

Knowing that the brain is the physical seat of habit,

and that conduct and character, alike, are the outcome of the habits we allow : knowing, too, that an inspiring idea initiates a new habit of thought, and, hence, a new habit of life ; we perceive that the great work of education is to inspire children with vitalising ideas as to the relations of life, departments of knowledge, subjects of thought : and to give deliberate care to the formation of those habits of the good life which are the outcome of vitalising ideas.

In this great work we seek and assuredly find the co-operation of the Divine Spirit, whom we recognise, in a sense rather new to *modern* thought, as the Supreme Educator of mankind in things that have been called secular, fully as much as in those that have been called sacred. We are free to give our whole force to these two great educational labours, of the inspiration of ideas and the formation of habits, because, except in the case of children somewhat mentally deficient, we do not consider that the "development of faculties" is any part of our work ; seeing that the children's so-called faculties are already greatly more acute than our own.

We have, too, in our possession, a test for systems that are brought under our notice, and can pronounce upon their educational value. For example, a little while ago, the London Board Schools held an exhibition of work ; and great interest was excited by an exhibit which came from New York representing a week's work in a school. The children worked for a week upon "an apple." They modelled it in clay, they painted it in brushwork, they stitched the outline on cardboard, they pricked it, they laid it in sticks (the pentagonal form of the seed vessel). Older boys and girls modelled an apple-tree and made a little ladder on which to run up the apple-tree and

gather the apples, and a wheel-barrow to carry the apples away, and a great deal more of the same kind. Everybody said, "How pretty, how ingenious, what a good idea!" and went away with the notion that here, at last, was education. But *we* ask, "What was the informing idea?" The external shape, the internal contents of an apple,—matters with which the children were already exceedingly well acquainted. What mental habitudes were gained by this week's work? They certainly learned to look at the apple, but think how many things they might have got familiar acquaintance with in the time. Probably the children were not consciously bored, because the impulse of the teachers enthusiasm carried them on. But, think of it—

" Rabbits hot and rabbits cold,  
Rabbits young and rabbits old,  
Rabbits tender and rabbits tough,"—

no doubt those children had enough—of apples anyway. This "apple" course is most instructive to us as emphasising the tendency in the human mind to accept and rejoice in any neat system which will produce immediate results, rather than to bring every such little course to the test of whether it does or does not further either or both of our great educational principles.

*Whither?* Our "whence" opens to us a "whither" of infinitely delightful possibilities. Seeing that each of us is labouring for the advance of the human race through the individual child we are educating, we consider carefully in what directions this advance is due, and indicated, and we proceed of set purpose and, endeavour to educate our children so that they shall advance with the tide. "Can ye not discern

the signs of the times ?” A new Renaissance is coming upon us, of unspeakably higher import than the last ; and we are bringing up our children to lead and guide, and, by every means help in the progress—progress by leaps and bounds—which the world is about to make. But “whither” is too large a question for the close of a chapter.



## CHAPTER XXV

### WHENCE AND WHITHER

#### PART II

THE morphologist, the biologist, leave many without hesitation in following the great *bouleversement* of thought, summed up in the term *evolution*. They are no longer able to believe otherwise than that man is the issue of processes, ages long in their development; and what is more, and even more curious, that each individual child, from the moment of his conception to that of his birth, appears in his own person to mark an incredible number of the stages of this evolutionary process. The realisation of this truth has made a great impression on the minds of men. We feel ourselves to be part of a process, and to be called upon, at the same time, to assist in the process, not for ourselves exactly, but for any part of the world upon which our influence bears; especially for the children who are so peculiarly given over to us. But there comes, as we have seen, a point where we must arise and make our protest. The physical evolution of man may admit of no doubt; the psychical evolution, on the other hand, is not only, *not proven*, but the whole weight of existing evidence appears to go into the opposite scale.

The age of materialism has run its course: we recognise matter as force, but as altogether subject

force, and that it is the spirit of a man which shapes and uses his material substance, in its own ways to its own ends. Who can tell the way of the spirit? Perhaps this is one of the ultimate questions upon which man has not yet been able to speculate to any purpose; but when we consider the almost unlimited powers of loving and of trusting, of discriminating and of apprehending, of perceiving and of knowing, which a child possesses, and compare these with the blunted sensibilities and slower apprehension of the grown man or woman of the same calibre, we are certainly not inclined to think that growth from less to more, and from small to great, is the condition of the spiritual life: that is, of that part of us which loves and worships, reasons and thinks, learns and applies knowledge. Rather would it seem to be true of every child in his degree, as of the divine and typical Child, that He giveth not the Spirit by measure to him.

It is curious how the philosophy of the Bible is always well in advance of our latest thought. "He grew in wisdom and in stature," we are told. Now what is wisdom—philosophy? Is it not the recognition of *relations*? First, we have to understand relations of time and space and matter, the natural philosophy which made up so much of the wisdom of Solomon; then, by slow degrees, and more and more, we learn that moral philosophy which determines our relations of love and justice and duty to each other: later, perhaps, we investigate the profound and puzzling subject of the inter-relations of our own most composite being,—mental philosophy. And in all these and beyond all these we apprehend slowly and feebly the highest relation of all, the relation to God, which we call religion. In this science of the relations of

things consists what we call wisdom, and wisdom is not born in any man,—apparently not even in the Son of man Himself. He grew in wisdom, in the sweet gradual apprehension of all the relations of life: but the power of apprehending, the strong, subtle, discerning spirit, whose function it is to grasp and understand, appropriate and use, all the relations which bind all things to all other things—this was not given to Him by measure; nor, we may reverently believe, is it so given to us.

That there are differences in the measures of men, in their intellectual and moral stature, is evident enough; but it is well that we should realise the nature of these differences, that they are differences in kind and not in degree; depending upon what we glibly call the laws of heredity, which bring it to pass that man in his various aspects shall make up that conceivably perfect whole possible to mankind. This is a quite different thing from the notion of a small and feeble measure of heart and intellect in the child, to grow by degrees into the robust and noble spiritual development which, according to the psychological evolutionist, should distinguish the adult human being.

These are quite practical and simple considerations for every one entrusted with the bringing up of a child, and are not to be set aside as abstract principles, the discussion of which should serve little purpose beyond that of sharpening the wits of the schoolmen. As a matter of fact, we do not *realise* children, we under-estimate them; in the divine words, we “despise” them, with the best intentions in the world, because we confound the immaturity of their frames, and their absolute ignorance as to the relations of things, with spiritual impotence: whereas

the fact probably is, that never is intellectual power so keen, the moral sense so strong, spiritual perception so piercing, as in those days of childhood which we regard with a supercilious, if kindly, smile. A child is a person in whom all possibilities are present—present now at this very moment—not to be educed after years and efforts manifold on the part of the educator: but indeed it is a greater thing to direct and use this wealth of spiritual power than to develop the so-called faculties of the child. It cannot be too strongly urged that our education of children will depend, *nolens volens*, upon the conception we form of them. If we regard them as instruments fit and capable for the carrying out of the Divine purpose in the progress of the world, we shall endeavour to discern the signs of the times, perceive in what directions we are being led, and prepare the children to carry forward the work of the world, by giving them vitalising ideas concerning, at any rate, some departments of that work.

Having settled it with ourselves that we and the children alike live for the advancement of the race, that our work is immediately with them, and, through them, mediately for all, and that they are perfectly fitted to receive those ideas which are for the inspiration of life, we must next settle it with ourselves in what directions we shall set up spiritual activities in the children.

We have sought to establish our *whence* in the potency of the child, we will look for our *whither* in the living thought of the day, which probably indicates the directions in which the race is making progress. We find that all men everywhere are keenly interested in science, that the world waits and watches for great discoveries; we, too, wait and watch,

believing that, as Coleridge said long ago, great ideas of Nature are imparted to minds already prepared to receive them by a higher Power than Nature herself.

At a late meeting of the British Association, the President lamented that the progress of science was greatly hindered by the fact that we no longer have field naturalists—close observers of Nature as she is. A literary journal made a lamentable remark there-upon. It is all written in books, said this journal, so we have no longer any need to go to Nature herself. Now the knowledge of Nature which we get out of books is not real knowledge; the use of books is, to help the young student to verify facts he has already seen for himself. We, of the P.N.E.U., are before all things, Nature-lovers; we conceive that intimate acquaintance with every natural object within his reach is the first, and possibly, the best part of a child's education. For himself, all his life long, he will be soothed by—

“The breathing balm,  
The silence and the calm,  
Of mute insensate things.”

And for science, he is in a position to do just the work which is most needed; he will be a close loving observer of Nature at first hand, storing facts, and free from all impatient greed for inferences.

Looking out on the realm of Art again, we think we discern the signs of the times. Some of us begin to learn the lesson which a prophet has been raised up to deliver to this generation. We begin to understand that mere technique, however perfect—whether in the rendering of flesh tints, or marbles, or of a musical composition of extreme difficulty—is not necessarily high Art. It is beginning to dawn upon us that Art



is great only in proportion to the greatness of the idea that it expresses ; while, what we ask of the execution, the technique, is that it shall be adequate to the inspiring idea. But surely these high themes have nothing to do with the bringing up of children ? Yes, they have ; everything. In the first place, we shall permit no *pseudo* Art to live in the same house with our children ; next, we shall bring our own facile tastes and opinions to some such searching test as we have indicated, knowing that the children imbibe the thoughts that are in us, whether we will or no ; and, lastly, we shall inspire our children with those great ideas which shall create a demand, any-way, for great Art.

In literature, we have definite ends in view, both for our own children, and for the world through them. We wish the children to grow up to find joy and refreshment in the taste, the flavour of a *book*. We do not mean by a book any printed matter in a binding, but a work possessing certain literary qualities able to bring that sensible delight to the reader which belongs to a literary word fitly spoken. It is a sad fact that we are losing our joy in literary form. We are in such haste to be instructed by facts or titilated by theories, that we have no leisure to linger over the mere putting of a thought. But this is our error, for words are mighty both to delight and to inspire. If we were not as blind as bats, we should long ago have discovered a truth very fully indicated in the Bible—that that which is once said with perfect fitness can never be said again, and becomes ever thereafter a living power in the world. But in literature, as in art, we require more than mere form. Great ideas are brooding over the chaos of our thought ; and it is he who shall say the things we are all dumbly

thinking, who shall be to us as a teacher sent from God.

For the children? They must grow up upon the best. There must never be a period in their lives when they are allowed to read or listen to twaddle or reading-made-easy. There is never a time when they are unequal to worthy thoughts, well put; inspiring tales, well told. Let Blake's "Songs of Innocence" represent their standard in poetry; De Foe and Stevenson, in prose; and we shall train a race of readers who will demand *literature*, that is, the fit and beautiful expression of inspiring ideas and pictures of life. Perhaps a printed form to the effect that gifts of books to the children will not be welcome in such and such a family, would greatly assist in this endeavour!

To instance one more point—there is a reaching out in all directions after the conception expressed in the words "solidarity of the race." We have probably never before felt as now in absolute relation with all men everywhere; everything human is precious to us, the past belongs to us as the present, and we linger tenderly over evidences of the personality of men and women who lived ages ago. An American poet expresses this feeling with western intensity, but he does not exaggerate when he tells us that *he* is the soldier wounded in battle, *he* is the galley slave, and *he* is the hero come to the rescue, that every human pulse is *his* pulse, every fall *his* fall, and every moral victory *his* triumph. The present writer recollects the moment when the conviction of the common sisterhood of women was brought home to her in a way never to be forgotten. She was driving from station to station in London, and saw a drunken woman carried on a door. She knew by

the shock of pain and the tears the sight brought that the woman was not outside of her, but was in some mysterious way part of her—her very self. This was a new perception to the girl, and one never again to be lost sight of. Such shocks of recognition probably come to most of us, and when they come to the Greathearts of the world we get our Elizabeth Frys, our Wilberforces, our Florence Nightingales. Deeds of pity have been done through all the Christian ages, and, indeed, wherever the human heart has had free play, but to feel pity for another and to be aware, however dimly, that that other is, part and lot, indissolubly bound up with ourselves—these are two things. We venture to believe that this is the stage which the education of mankind, as divinely conducted, has reached in our day. In other days men did good for the love of God, or to save their own souls; they acted uprightly because it behoved themselves to be just in all their dealings; but the motives which stir us in our relation to each other now are more intimate, tender, indefinable, soul-compelling. What the issues will be when we have learned to con understandingly this new page in the Book of Life we cannot foretell, but we may hope that the Kingdom of God is coming upon us.

Studying reverently *these* signs of the times, what indications do we find for our guidance in the bringing up of children? The tender sympathy of the child must be allowed to flow in ways of help and kindness towards all life that anyway touches his. I once knew a little girl of five, who came in from her walk under an obvious cloud of distress. "What is the matter, H——?" she was asked. A quick little "Nothing," with the reticence of her family, was all that could be got out of her for

some minutes; but a caress broke her down, and, in a passion of pity, she sobbed out, "A poor man, no home, no food, no bed to lie upon!" Young as she was, the revelation of the common life in humanity had come upon her; she was one with the beggar and suffered with him. Children must, of course, be shielded from such intense suffering, but woe to mother or nurse who would shield, by systematically hardening, the child's heart. This little girl should have had the relief of helping, and then the pain of sympathy would not have been too much for her. Whatever our own opinion of the world and of human nature, let us be careful how we breathe the word "impostor" into the ear of a child, until he is old enough to understand that if the man is an impostor that does but make him the object of a deeper pity and a wiser help—a help whose object is not to relieve but to reform.

Again, children are open to vanity as to all other evil dispositions possible to human nature. They must be educated to give and to help without any notion that to do so is goodness on their part. It is very easy to keep them in the attitude of mind natural to a child, that to serve is promotion to the person who serves, for indeed he has no absolute claim to be in a position to pour benefits upon another. The child's range of sympathy must be widened, his love must go out to far and near, rich and poor; distress abroad and distress at home should appeal to him equally; and always he should give some manner of help *at real cost to himself*. When he is old enough, the object lessons of the newspapers should be brought before him. He should know that atrocities in Armenia, for instance, are the cause of real heart-trouble in English homes;

that there are cases of abstract right and wrong for nations as for individuals, which admit of no considerations of expediency ; that to succour our neighbour in mortal distress is such an occasion, and that he who has fallen among thieves is therefore our neighbour, whether as a nation or as an individual. Do not let us bring up our children in glass houses, for fear of the ravages of pity upon their tender hearts. Let them know of any distress which would naturally come before them, and let them ease their own pain by alleviating in some way the sufferings they sorrow for. Children were not given to us with infinite possibilities of love and pity that we might choke the springs of pity and train them into hardness of heart. It is our part, on the contrary, to prepare these little ministers of grace for the larger and fuller revelation of the kingdom of heaven that is coming upon us.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### *THE GREAT RECOGNITION*

MR. RUSKIN has done a great service to modern thought in interpreting for us the harmonious and ennobling scheme of education and philosophy recorded upon one quarter of what he calls the "Vaulted Book," that is, the Spanish Chapel attached to the Church of Sta. Maria Novella, in Florence.

Many of our readers have probably studied under Mr. Ruskin's guidance the illuminating teaching of the frescoes which cover roof and walls; but all will like to be reminded of the lessons they have pondered with reverence and wonder. "The descent of the Holy Ghost is on the left hand (of the roof) as you enter. The Madonna and Disciples are gathered in an upper chamber: underneath are the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, &c., who hear them speak in their own tongues. Three dogs are in the foreground—their mythic purpose, to mark the share of the lower animals in the gentleness given by the outpouring of the Spirit of Christ. . . . On this and the opposite side of the Chapel are represented by Simon Memmi's hand, the teaching power of the Spirit of God and the saving power of the Christ of God in the world, according to the understanding of Florence in his time.

"We will take the side of intellect first. Beneath the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit in the point of the arch beneath are the three Evangelical Virtues. With-

out these, says Florence, you can have no science. Without Love, Faith, and Hope — no intelligence. Under these are the four Cardinal Virtues . . . . . Temperance, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude. Under these are the great Prophets and Apostles . . . . . Under the line of Prophets, as powers summoned by their voices are the mythic figures of the seven theological or spiritual and the seven geological or natural sciences ; and under the feet of each of them the figure of its Captain-teacher to the world."

We hope our readers will continue to study Mr. Ruskin's exposition of the "Vaulted Book" in *Mornings in Florence* : it is wonderfully full of teaching and suggestion. Our immediate concern is with the seven mythic figures representing the natural sciences, and with the figure of the Captain-teacher of each. First we have Grammar, a gracious figure teaching three Florentine children ; and, beneath, Priscian. Next, Rhetoric, strong, calm, and cool ; and below, the figure of Cicero with a quite beautiful face. Next, Logic, with perfect pose of figure and lovely countenance ; and beneath her, Aristotle—intense keenness of search in his half-closed eyes. Next, Music, with head inclined in intent listening to the sweet and solemn strains she is producing from her antique instrument ; and underneath, Tubal Cain, not Jubal, as the inventor of harmony — perhaps the most marvellous record that Art has produced of the impact of a great idea upon the soul of a man but semi-civilised. Astronomy succeeds, with majestic brow and upraised hand, and below her, Zoroaster, exceedingly beautiful — "the delicate Persian head made softer still by the elaborately wreathed silken hair." Next, Geometry, looking down, considering some practical problem, with her carpenter's square

in her hand, and below her, Euclid. And lastly, Arithmetic, holding two fingers up in the act of calculating, and under her, Pythagoras wrapped in the science of number.

“The thoughts of God are broader than the measures of man’s mind.”

But here we have the breadth of minds so wide in the sweep of their intelligence, so profound in their insight, that we are almost startled with the perception that, pictured on these walls, we have indeed a true measure of the thoughts of God. Let us glance for a moment at our nineteenth century conception of education. In the first place, we divide education into religious and secular. The more devout among us insist upon religious education as well as secular. Many of us are content to do without religious education altogether, and are satisfied with what we not only *call* secular but *make* secular, in the sense in which we understand the word, *i.e.*, entirely limited to the uses of this visible world. Many Christian people rise a little higher; they conceive that even grammar and arithmetic may in some, not very clear, way be used for God; but the Great Recognition, that God the Holy Spirit is Himself, personally, the Imparter of knowledge, the Instructor of youth, the Inspirer of genius, is a conception so far lost to us that we should think it distinctly irreverent to conceive of the divine teaching as co-operating with ours in a child’s arithmetic lesson, for example. But the Florentine mind of the Middle Ages went further than this: it believed, not only that the seven Liberal Arts were fully under the direct outpouring of the Holy Ghost, but that every fruitful idea, every original conception, whether in Euclid, or grammar, or music,

was a direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit, without any thought at all as to whether the person so inspired named himself by the name of God, or recognised whence his inspiration came. All of these seven figures are those of persons whom we should roughly class as Pagans, and whom we might be lightly inclined to consider as outside the pale of the divine inspiration. It is truly difficult to grasp the amazing boldness of this scheme of the education of the world which Florence accepted in simple faith.

But we must not accept even an inspiring idea blindly. Were these people of the Middle Ages right in this plan and conception of theirs? Plato hints at some such thought in his contention that knowledge and virtue are fundamentally identical, and that if virtue be divine in its origin, so must knowledge be also. Ancient Egypt, too, was not in the dark in this matter. "Pharaoh said unto his servants, can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is." Practical discernment and knowledge of every-day matters, and of how to deal with emergencies, were not held by this king of Egypt to be teachings unworthy of the Spirit of God. "The Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied among them," we are told of Saul, and we may believe that this is the history of every great invention and every great discovery of the secrets of nature. "Then David gave to Solomon his son . . . the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord." We have here a suggestion of the source of every conception of beauty to be expressed in forms of art. But it is not only with high themes of science and art that the divine Spirit concerns Himself. It sometimes occurs to one to wonder who invented, in the first place, the way of

using the most elemental necessities of life. Who first discovered the means of producing fire, of joining wood, of smelting ores, of sowing seed, of grinding corn? We cannot think of ourselves as living without knowing these things; and yet each one must have been a great idea when it first made a stir in the mind of the man who conceived it. Where did he get his first idea? Happily, we are told, in a case so typical that it is a key to all the rest:—

“Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.”—Isa. xxviii. 24, &c.

In the things of science, in the things of art, in the things of practical every-day life, his God doth instruct him and doth teach him, her God doth instruct her and doth teach her. Let this be the mother's key to the whole of the education of each boy and each girl; not of her *children*; the divine Spirit does not work with nouns of multitude, but with each single child. Because He is infinite, the whole world is not too great a school for this indefatigable Teacher, and because He is infinite, He is able to give the whole



of His infinite attention for the whole time to each one of His multitudinous pupils. We do not sufficiently rejoice in the wealth that the infinite nature of our God brings to each of us.

And what subjects are under the direction of this Divine Teacher? The child's faith and hope and charity—that we already knew; his temperance, justice, prudence, and fortitude—that we might have guessed; his grammar, rhetoric, logic, music, astronomy, geometry, arithmetic—this we might have forgotten, if these Florentine teachers had not reminded us; his practical skill in the use of tools and instruments, from a knife and fork to a microscope, and in the sensible management of all the affairs of life—these also come from the Lord, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. His God doth instruct him and doth teach him. Let the mother visualise the thought as an illuminated scroll about her new-born child, and let her never contemplate any kind of instruction for her child, except under the sense of the divine co-operation. But we must remember that here as everywhere the infinite and almighty Spirit of God works under limitations. Our co-operation appears to be the indispensable condition of all the divine workings. We recognise this in what we call spiritual things, meaning the things that have to do more especially with our approaches to God; but the new thing to us is, that grammar, for example, may be taught in such a way as to invite and obtain the co-operation of the Divine Teacher, or in such a way as to exclude His illuminating presence from the schoolroom. We do not mean that spiritual virtues may be exhibited by the teacher and encouraged in the child in the course of a grammar lesson; this is no doubt true, and is a point to be remembered; but perhaps the immediate

point is that the teaching of grammar by its guiding ideas and simple principles, the true, direct, and humble teaching of grammar, without pedantry and without verbiage, is, we may venture to believe, accompanied by the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, of whom is all knowledge. The contrary is equally true. Such teaching as enwraps a child's mind in folds of many words, which his thought is unable to penetrate, which gives him rules, and definitions, and tables, in lieu of ideas—this is teaching which excludes and renders impossible the divine co-operation.

This great recognition resolves that discord in our lives of which most of us are, more or less, aware. The things of sense we are willing to subordinate to the things of spirit; at any rate, we are willing to endeavour ourselves in this direction. We mourn over our failures and try again, and recognise that here lies the Armageddon for every soul of man. But there is a debateable land. Is it not a fact that the spiritual life is exigent, demands our sole interest and concentrated energies? Yet the claims of intellect—mind, of the æsthetic sense—taste, press upon us urgently. We must think, we must know, we must rejoice in and create the beautiful. And if all the burning thoughts that stir in the minds of men, all the beautiful conceptions they give birth to, are things apart from God, then we, too, must have a separate life, a life apart from God, a division of ourselves into secular and religious—discord and unrest. We believe that this is the fertile source of the unfaith of the day, especially in young and ardent minds. The claims of intellect are urgent; the intellectual life is a necessity not to be foregone at any hazard. It is impossible for these to recognise

in themselves a dual nature ; a dual spirituality, so to speak ; and, if there are claims which definitely oppose themselves to the claims of intellect, these other claims must go to the wall ; and the young man or woman, full of promise and power, becomes a free-thinker, an agnostic, what you will. But once the intimate relation, the relation of Teacher and taught in all things of the mind and spirit, be fully recognised, our feet are set in a large room ; there is space for free development in all directions ; and this free and joyous development, whether of intellect or heart, is recognised as a Godward movement. Various activities, with unity of aim, bring harmony and peace into our lives ; more, this perception of the intimate dealings of the divine Spirit with our spirit in the things of the intellect, as well as in those of the moral nature, makes us as keenly alive in the one case as in the other to the insidious promptings of the spirit of evil ; we become aware of the possibility of intellectual sin as of moral sin ; we perceive that in the region of pure reason, also, it behoves us to see that we enter not into temptation. We rejoice in the expansion of intellect and the expansion of heart and the ease and freedom of him who is always in touch with the inspiring Teacher, with Whom are infinite stores of learning, wisdom, and virtue, graciously placed at our disposal.

Such a recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit as the Educator of mankind, in things intellectual as well as in things moral and spiritual, gives us "new thoughts of God, new hopes of Heaven," a sense of harmony in our efforts and of acceptance of all that we are. What stands between us and the realisation of this more blessed life ? This ; that we do not realise ourselves as spiritual beings invested

with bodies,—living, emotional, a snare to us and a joy to us,—but which are, after all, the mere organs and interpreters of our spiritual intention. Once we see that we are dealing spirit with spirit with the friend at whose side we are sitting, with the people who attend to our needs, we shall be able to realise how incessant is the commerce between the divine Spirit and our human spirit. It will be to us as when one stops one's talk and one's thoughts in the spring-time, to find the world full of bird-music unheard the instant before. In like manner, we shall learn to make pause in our thoughts, and shall hear in our intellectual perplexities, as well as in our moral, the clear, sweet, cheering and inspiring tones of our spiritual Guide. We are not speaking here of what is commonly called the religious life, or of our definite approaches to God in prayer and praise; these things all Christian people comprehend more or less fully; we are speaking only of the intellectual life, the development of which in children is the aim of our subjects and methods of instruction.

Supposing we are willing to make this great recognition, to engage ourselves to accept and invite the daily, hourly, incessant co-operation of the divine Spirit, in, to put it definitely and plainly, the school-room work of our children, how must we shape our own conduct to make this co-operation active, or even possible? We are told that the Spirit is life; therefore, that which is dead, dry as dust, mere bare bones, can have no affinity with Him, can do no other than smother and deaden His vitalising influences. A first condition of this vitalising teaching is that all the thought we offer to our children shall be *living* thought; no mere dry summaries of facts will do;



given, the vitalising idea, children will readily hang the mere facts upon the idea as upon a peg capable of sustaining all that it is needful to retain. We begin by believing in the children as spiritual beings of unmeasured powers—intellectual, moral, spiritual—capable of receiving and constantly enjoying intuitions from, the intimate converse of, the divine Spirit. With this thought of a child to begin with, we shall perceive that whatever is stale and flat and dull to us must needs be stale and flat and dull to him, and also that there is no subject which has not a fresh and living way of approach. Are we teaching geography? The child discovers with the explorer, journeys with the traveller, receives impressions new and vivid from some other mind which is immediately receiving these impressions; not after they have been made stale and dull by a process of filtering through many intermediate minds, and, have found at last their way into a little text-book. Is he learning history? his concern is not with strings of names and of dates, nor with nice little reading-made-easy stories, brought down, as we mistakenly say, to the level of his comprehension; we recognise that his comprehension is at least equal to our own, and that it is only his ignorance of the attendant circumstances we have to deal with as luminously as we can. We recognise that history for him is, to live in the lives of those strong personalities which at any given time impress themselves most upon their age and country. This is not the sort of thing to be got out of nice little history books for children, whether “Little Arthur’s,” or somebody’s “Outlines.” We take the child to the living sources of history—a child of seven is fully able to comprehend Plutarch, in Plutarch’s own words (translated), without any diluting



and with little explanation. Give him living thought in this kind, and you make possible the co-operation of the living Teacher. The child's progress is by leaps and bounds, and you wonder why. In teaching music, again, let him once perceive the beautiful laws of harmony, the personality, so to speak, of Music, looking out upon him from among the queer little black notes, and the piano lesson has ceased to be drudgery.

It is unnecessary to go further into details ; every subject has its living way, with what Coleridge calls "its guiding idea" at the head, and it is only as we discover this living way in each case that a subject of instruction makes for the education of a child. No neat system is of any use ; it is the very nature of a system to grow stale in the using ; every subject, every division of a subject, every lesson, in fact, must be brought up for examination before it is offered to the child as to whether it is living, vital, of a nature to invite the living Intellect of the universe. One more thing is of vital importance ; children must have books, living books ; the best are not too good for them ; anything less than the best is not good enough ; and if it is needful to exercise economy, let go everything that belongs to soft and luxurious living before letting go the duty of supplying the books, and the frequent changes of books, which are necessary for the constant stimulation of the child's intellectual life. We need not say one word about the necessity for living thought in the teacher ; it is only so far as he is intellectually alive that he can be effective in the wonderful process which we glibly call "education."

## CHAPTER XXVII

### *THE ETERNAL CHILD*

“The Waits !

Slowly they play, poor careful souls,  
With wistful thoughts of Christmas cheer,  
Unwitting how their music rolls  
Away the burden of the year.  
And with the charm, the homely rune,  
Our thoughts like childhood's thoughts are given,  
When all our pulses beat in tune  
With all the stars of heaven.”

—JOHN DAVIDSON.

IN these levelling days we like to think that everybody has quite equal opportunities in some direction ; but Christmas joy, for example, is not for every one in like measure. It is not only that those who are in need, sorrow, or any other adversity do not sit down to the Christmas feast of joy and thanksgiving ; for, indeed, a Benjamin's portion is often served to the sorrowful. But it takes the presence of children to help us to realise the idea of the Eternal Child. The Dayspring is with the children, and we think their thoughts and are glad in their joy ; and every mother knows out of her own heart's fulness what the Birth at Bethlehem means. Those of us who have not children catch echoes. We hear the wondrous story read in church, the waits chant the tale, the church-bells echo it, and the years that are no more come back to us, and our hearts are meek and mild, glad and gay, loving and tender, as those of little children ;

but, alas, only for the little while occupied by the passing thought. Too soon the dreariness of daily living settles down upon us again, and we become a little impatient, do we not, of the Christmas demand of joyousness.

But it is not so where there are children. The old, old story has all its first freshness as we tell it to the eager listeners; as we listen to it ourselves with their vivid interest it becomes as real and fresh to us as it is to them. Hard thoughts drop away like scales from our eyes; we are young once more with the children's young life, which, we are mysteriously made aware, is the life eternal. What a mystery it is! Does not every mother, made wise unto salvation, who holds a babe in her arms, feel with tremulous awe that that deep saying is true for her also, "The same is my mother!" For the little child is the true St. Christopher, in him is the light and life of Christ; and every birth is a message of salvation, and a reminder that we, too, must humble ourselves and become as little children. This is, perhaps, the real secret of the world's progress—that every babe comes into the world with an evangel, which witnesses of necessity to his parents' hearts. That we, too, are children, the children of God, that He would have us be as children, is the message that the new-born child never fails to bear, however little we heed, or however soon we forget. It is well that parents should ponder these things, for the child's estate is a holy one, and it is given to his parents to safeguard the little heir of blessedness.

It is not possible to enter fully into so large a subject, but it may be worth while to characterise two or three of the landmarks of this child's estate; for how shall we safeguard that which we do not

recognise, and how recognise that to which we have failed to give deliberate attention. The note of childhood is, before all things, humility. What we call innocence is probably resolvable into this grace—repellent to the nature of man until he shall embrace it, and then disclosing itself to him as divine. An old and saintly writer has a luminous thought on this subject of humility. "There never was, nor ever will be, but one humility in the whole world, and that is the one humility of Christ, which never any man, since the fall of Adam, had the least degree of but from Christ. Humility is one, in the same sense and truth as Christ is one, the Mediator is one, Redemption is one. There are not two Lambs of God that take away the sins of the world. But if there was any humility besides that of Christ, there would be something else besides Him that could take away the sins of the world."\* Now, if there be but one humility in the whole world, and that humility be the humility of Christ, and if our Lord pronounces the little child also to be humble, is it not because of the indwelling divinity, the glory in the child, which we call innocence?

Our common notion of humility is inaccurate. We regard it as a relative quality. We humble ourselves to this one and that, bow to the prince and lord it over the peasant. This is why the grace of humility does not commend itself to us even in our most sincere moods. We feel that this relative humility is hardly consistent with self-respect and due independence of character. We have been taught to recognise humility as a Christian grace, and therefore do not utter our protest; but this misconception confuses our thought on an important subject. For humility

\* William Law.

is absolute, not relative. It is by no means a taking of our place among our fellows according to a given scale, some being above us by many grades and others as far below. There is no reference to above or below in the humble soul, which is equally humble before an infant, a primrose, a worm, a beggar, a prince.

This, if we think of it, is the state natural to children. Every person and thing commands their interest; but the person or thing in action is deeply interesting. "May I go and make mud-pies with the boy in the gutter?" prays the little prince, discerning no difference at all; and the little boy in the gutter would meet him with equal frankness. What is the secret of this absolute humility, humble alike towards higher or lower, and unaware of distinctions? Our notion of a humble person is one who thinks rather slightly of himself, who says, deprecatingly, "Oh, I can't do this or that, you know, I'm not clever;" "I'm not cut out for public work of any sort, I've no power or influence;" "Ah! well, I hope he'll be a better man than his father, I don't think much of myself anyway;" "Your children have great advantages, I wish mine had such a mother, but I'm not a bit wise." Such things are often said, in all sincerity, without the least *souçon* of the "Uriah Heap" sentiment. The thing we quarrel with is, that the speakers are apt to feel that they have, anyway, the saving grace of humility. It is worth while to reflect that there are no such deprecatory utterances ascribed to the Example of that "great humility" which we are bound to follow; and if there is not the slightest evidence of humility in this kind in the divine life, which was all humility, we must re-cast our notions. Children, too, never make deprecatory remarks; that is because they are humble, and with the divine



Example before us, and the example of our children, we may receive it that humility does not consist in thinking little of ourselves. It is a higher principle, a blessed state, only now and then attained by us elders, but in which the children perpetually dwell, and in which it is the will of God that we should keep them.

Humility does not think much or little of itself; it does not think of itself at all. It is a negative rather than a positive quality, being an absence of self-consciousness rather than the presence of any distinctive virtue. The person who is unaware of himself is capable of all lowly service, of all suffering for others, of bright cheerfulness under all the small crosses and worries of everyday life. This is the quality that makes heroes, and this is the quality that makes saints. We are able to pray, but we are hardly able to worship or to praise, to say, "*My* soul doth magnify the Lord," so long as in the innermost chamber of our hearts we are self-occupied.

The Christian religion is, in its very nature, objective. It offers for our worship, reverence, service, adoration and delight, a Divine Person, the Desire of the world. Simplicity, happiness and expansion come from the outpouring of a human heart upon that which is altogether worthy. But we mistake our own needs, are occupied with our own falls and our own repentances, our manifold states of consciousness. Our religion is subjective first, and after that, so far as we are able, objective. The order should rather be objective first, and after that, so far as we have any time or care to think about ourselves, subjective.

Now the tendency of children is to be altogether objective, not at all subjective, and perhaps that is why they are said to be first in the kingdom of heaven. This philosophic distinction is not one

which we can put aside as having no bearing on everyday life. It strikes the keynote for the training of children. In proportion as our training tends to develop the subjective principle, it tends to place our children on a lower level of purpose, character, and usefulness throughout their lives: while so far as we develop the objective principle, with which the children are born, we make them capable of love, service, heroism, worship.

It is curious to observe how every function of our most complex nature may have its subjective or its objective development. The child may eat and drink and rest with the most absolute disregard of what he is about, his parents taking care that these things are happily arranged for him, but taking equal care that his attention shall not be turned to the pleasures of appetite. But this is a point that we hardly need to dwell upon, as thoughtful parents are agreed that children's meals should be so regularly pleasant and various that the child naturally eats with satisfaction and thinks little or nothing of what he is eating; that is, parents are careful that, in the matter of food, children shall not be self-regardful.

Perhaps parents are less fully awake to the importance of regulating a child's sensations. We still kiss the place to make it well, make an *obvious* fuss if a string is uncomfortable or a crumpled rose-leaf is irritating the child's tender skin. We have forgotten the seven Christian virtues and the seven deadly sins of earlier ages, and do not much consider in the bringing up of our children whether the grace of fortitude is developing under our training. Now fortitude has its higher and its lower offices. It concerns itself with things of the mind and with things of the body, and, perhaps, it is safe to argue

that fortitude on the higher plane is only possible when it has become the habit of the nature on the lower plane. A baby may be trained in fortitude, and is much the happier for such training. A child should be taught that it is beneath him to take any notice of cold or heat, pain or discomfort. We do not perceive the sensations to which we do not attend, and it is quite possible to forget even a bad toothache in some new and vivid interest. Health and happiness depend largely upon the disregard of sensations, and the child who is encouraged to say, "I'm so cold," "I'm so tired," "My vest pricks me," and so on, is likely to develop into the hysterical girl or the hypochondriac man; for it is an immutable law that, as with our appetites, so with our sensations, in proportion as we attend to them will they dominate us, until a single sensation of slight pain or discomfort may occupy our whole field of vision, making us unaware that there is any joy in living, any beauty in the earth.

But these are the least of the reasons why a child should be trained to put up with little discomforts and take no notice. The child, who has been allowed to become self-regardful in the matter of sensations, as of appetites, has lost his child's estate, he is no longer humble; he is in the condition of thinking about himself, instead of that infinitely blessed condition of not being aware of himself at all. Nor must we permit ourselves to make an exception to this rule in the case of the poor little invalid. For him, far more than for the healthy child, it is important that he should be trained to take no account of his sensations; and many a brave little hero suffers anguish without conscious thought, and therefore, of course, suffers infinitely less than if he had been

induced to dwell upon his pains. We say, induced, because though a child may cry with sudden distress, he does not really think about his aches and pains unless his thoughts be turned to his ailments by those about him.

We are not advising any Spartan regimen. It is not permitted to us to inflict hardness in order that the children may learn to endure. Our care is simply to direct their consciousness from their own sensations. The well-known anecdote of the man, who, before the days of chloroform, had his leg cut off without any conscious sensations of pain, because he determinately kept his mind occupied with other things, is an extreme but instructive instance of what may be done in this direction. At the same time, though the child himself be taught to disregard them, his sensations should be carefully watched by his elders, for they must consider and act upon the danger signals which the child himself must be taught to disregard. But it is usually possible to attend to a child's sensations without letting him know they have been observed.

This, of the sensations, is only one example of the altruistic or egoistic direction which the various operations of a child's complex nature may receive. His affections, again, are capable of receiving a subjective or objective direction, according to the suggestions which reach him from without. Every child comes into the world richly endowed with a well of love, a fountain of justice ; but whether the stream of love shall flow to the right or the left, whether it shall be egoistic or altruistic, depends on the child's earliest training. A child who is taught from the first the delights of giving and sharing, of loving and bearing, will always spend himself freely on others, will love

and serve, seeking for nothing again ; but the child who recognises that he is the object of constant attention, consideration, love and service, becomes self-regardful, self-seeking, selfish, almost without his fault, so strongly is he influenced by the direction his thoughts receive from those about him. So, too, of that other fountain, of justice, with which every child is born. There again, the stream may flow forth in either, but not in both, of the channels, the egoistic or the altruistic. The child's demand for justice may be all for himself, or, from the very first, the rights of others may be kept before his eyes. He may be taught to occupy himself with *his own rights and other people's duties*, and, if he is, his state of mind is easily discernible by the catch-words often on his lips, "It's a shame!" "It's not fair!" or he may, on the other hand, be so filled with the notion of *his own duties and other people's rights*, that the claims of self slip quietly into the background. This kind cometh forth only by prayer, but it is well to clear our thoughts and know definitely what we desire for our children, because only so can we work intelligently towards the fulfilment of our desire. It is sad to pray, and frustrate the answer by our own action ; but this is, alas, too possible.

During each coming festival of the Eternal Child, may parents ponder how best to keep their own children in the blessed child-estate, recollecting that the humility which Christ commends in the children is what may be described, philosophically, as the objective principle as opposed to the subjective, and that, in proportion as a child becomes self-regardful in any function of his being, he loses the grace of humility. This is the broad principle ; the practical application will need constant watchfulness, and constant efforts,



especially in holiday seasons, to keep friends and visitors from showing their love for the children in any way that shall tend to develop self-consciousness.

This, of humility, is not only a counsel of perfection, but is, perhaps, the highest counsel of perfection ; and when we put it to parents, we offer it to those for whom no endeavour is too difficult, no aim too lofty ; to those who are doing the most to advance the Kingdom of Christ.

BOOK II

*ESSAYS IN PRACTICAL EDUCATION*



## CHAPTER I

### THE PHILOSOPHER AT HOME

“HE has *such* a temper, ma’am !”

And there, hot, flurried, and, generally at her wits’ end, stood the poor nurse at the door of her mistress’s room. The terrific bellowing which filled the house was enough to account for the maid’s distress. Mrs. Belmont looked worried. She went up wearily to what she well knew was a weary task. A quarter of an hour ago life had looked very bright—the sun shining, sparrows chirping, lilac and laburnum making a gay show in the suburban gardens about ; she thought of her three nestlings in the nursery, and her heart was like a singing-bird giving out chirps of thanks and praise. But that was all changed. The outside world was as bright as ever, but she was under a cloud. She knew too well how those screams from the nursery would spoil her day.

There the boy lay, beating the ground with fists and feet ; emitting one prodigious roar after another, features convulsed, eyes protruding, in the unrestrained rage of a wild creature, so transfigured by passion that even his mother doubted if the noble countenance and lovely smile of her son had any existence beyond her fond imagination. He eyed his mother askance through his tumbled, yellow hair, but her presence seemed only to aggravate the demon in possession. The screams were more violent ; the

beating of the ground more than ever like a maniac's rage.

"Get up, Guy."

Renewed screams ; more violent action of the limbs !

"Did you hear me, Guy?" in tones of enforced calmness.

The uproar subsided a little, but when Mrs. Belmont laid her hand on his shoulder to raise him, the boy sprang to his feet, ran into her, head-foremost, like a young bull, kicked her, beat her with his fists, tore her dress with his teeth, and would no doubt have ended by overthrowing his delicate mother, but that Mr. Belmont, no longer able to endure the disturbance, came up in time to disengage the raging child and carry him off to his mother's room. Once in, the key was turned upon him, and Guy was left to "subside at his leisure," said his father.

Breakfast was not a cheerful meal, either upstairs or down. Nurse was put out ; snapped up little Flo, shook baby for being tiresome, until she had them both in tears. In the dining-room, Mr. Belmont read the *Times* with a frown which last night's debate did not warrant ; sharp words were at his tongue's end, but, in turning the paper, he caught sight of his wife's pale face and untasted breakfast. He said nothing, but she knew and suffered under his thoughts fully as much as if they had been uttered. Meantime, two closed doors and the wide space between the rooms hardly served to dull the ear-torturing sounds that came from the prisoner.

All at once there was a lull, a sudden and complete cessation of sound. Was the child in a fit ?

"Excuse me a minute, Edward ;" and Mrs. Belmont flew upstairs, followed shortly by her husband. What



was her surprise to see Guy with composed features contemplating himself in the glass ! He held in his hand a proof of his own photograph which had just come from the photographer's. The boy had been greatly interested in the process ; and here was the picture arrived, and Guy was solemnly comparing it with that image of himself which the looking-glass presented.

Nothing more was said on the subject ; Mr. Belmont went to the City, and his wife went about her household affairs with a lighter heart than she had expected to carry that day. Guy was released, and allowed to return to the nursery for his breakfast, which his mother found him eating in much content and with the sweetest face in the world ; no more trace of passion than a June day bears when the sun comes out after a thunderstorm. Guy was, indeed, delicious ; attentive and obedient to Harriet, full of charming play to amuse the two little ones, and very docile and sweet with his mother, saying from time to time the quaintest things. You would have thought he had been trying to make up for the morning's fracas, had he not looked quite unconscious of wrong-doing.

This sort of thing had gone on since the child's infancy. Now, a frantic outburst of passion, to be so instantly followed by a sweet April-day face and a sunshiny temper that the resolutions his parents made about punishing or endeavouring to reform him passed away like hoar-frost before the child's genial mood.

A sunshiny day followed this stormy morning ; the next day passed in peace and gladness, but, the next, some hair astray, some crumpled rose-leaf under him, brought on another of Guy's furious outbursts. Once

again the same dreary routine was gone through; and, once again, the tempestuous morning was forgotten in the sunshine of the child's day.

Not by the father, though: at last, Mr. Belmont was roused to give his full attention to the mischief which had been going on under his eyes for nearly the five years of Guy's short life. It dawned upon him—other people had seen it for years—that his wife's nervous headaches and general want of tone might well be due to this constantly recurring distress. He was a man of reading and intelligence, in touch with the scientific thought of the day, and especially interested in what may be called the physical basis of character,—the interaction which is ever taking place between the material brain and the immaterial thought and feeling of which it is the organ. He had even made little observations and experiments, declared to be valuable by his friend and ally, Dr. Steinbach, the head physician of the county hospital.

For a whole month he spread crumbs on the window-sill every morning at five minutes to eight; the birds gathered as punctually, and by eight o'clock the "table" was cleared and not a crumb remained. So far, the experiment was a great delight to the children, Guy and Flo, who were all agog to know how the birds knew the time.

After a month of free breakfasts: "You shall see now whether or no the birds come because they see the crumbs." The prospect was delightful, but, alas! this stage of the experiment was very much otherwise to the pitiful childish hearts.

"Oh, father, *please* let us put out crumbs for the poor little birds, they are so hungry!" a prayer seconded by Mrs. Belmont, met with very ready acceptance. The best of us have our moments of weakness.

“Very interesting,” said the two savants. “Nothing could show more clearly the readiness with which a habit is formed in even the less intelligent of the creatures.”

“Yes, and more than that, it shows the automatic nature of the action once the habit is formed. Observe, the birds came punctually and regularly when there were no longer crumbs for them. They did not come, look for their breakfast, and take sudden flight when it was not there, but they settled as before, stayed as long as before, and then flew off without any sign of disappointment. That is, they came, as we set one foot before another in walking, just out of habit, without any looking for crumbs, or conscious intention of any sort, a mere automatic or machine-like action with which conscious thought has nothing to do.”

Of another little experiment Mr. Belmont was especially proud, because it brought down, as it were, two quarries at a stroke; touched heredity and automatic action in one little series of observations. Rover, the family dog, appeared in the first place as a miserable puppy saved from drowning. He was of no breed to speak of, but care and good living agreed with him. He developed a handsome shaggy white coat, a quiet, well-featured face, and betrayed his low origin only by one inveterate habit; carts he took no notice of, but never a carriage, small or great, appeared in sight but he ran yelping at the heels of the horses in an intolerable way, contriving at the same time to dodge the whip like any street Arab. Oddly enough, it came out through the milkman that Rover came of a mother who met with her death through this very peccadillo.

Here was an opportunity. The point was, to prove not only that the barking was automatic, but that the

most inveterate habit, even an inherited habit, is open to cure.

Mr. Belmont devoted himself to the experiment: he gave orders that, for a month, Rover should go out with no one but himself. Two pairs of ears were on the alert for wheels; two, distinguished between carriage and cart. Now Rover was the master of an accomplishment of which he and the family were proud: he could carry a newspaper in his mouth. Wheels in the distance, then, "Hi! Rover!" and Rover trotted along, the proud bearer of the *Times*. This went on daily for a month, until at last the association between wheels and newspaper was established, and a distant rumble would bring him up—a demand in his eyes. Rover was cured. By-and-by the paper was unnecessary, and "To heel! good dog!" was enough when an ominous falling of the jaw threatened a return of the old habit.

It is extraordinary how wide is the gap between theory and practice in most of our lives. "The man who knows the power of habit has a key wherewith to regulate his own life and the lives of his household, down to that of the cat sitting at his hearth." (*Applause.*) Thus, Mr. Belmont at a scientific gathering. But only this morning did it dawn upon him that, with this key between his fingers, he was letting his wife's health, his child's life, be ruined by a habit fatal alike to present peace, and to the hope of manly self-possession in the future. Poor man! he had a bad half-hour that morning on his way Citywards. He was not given to introspection, but, when it was forced upon him, he dealt honestly.

"I must see Steinbach to-night, and talk the whole thing out with him."

. . . . .

“Ah, so ; the dear Guy ! And how long is it, do you say, since the boy has thus out-broken ?”

“All his life, for anything I know — certainly it began in his infancy.”

“And do you think, my good friend”—here the Doctor laid a hand on his friend’s arm, and peered at him with twinkling eyes and gravely set mouth—“do you think it possible that he has—a—*inherited* this little weakness ? A grandfather, perhaps ?”

“You mean me, I know ; yes, it’s a fact. And I got it from my father, and he, from his. We’re not a good stock. I know I’m an irascible fellow, and it has stood in my way all through life.”

“Fair and softly, my dear fellow ! go not so fast. I cannot let you say bad things of my best friend. But this I allow ; there are thorns, bristles all over ; and they come out at a touch. How much better for you and for Science had the father cured all that !”

“As I must for Guy ! Yes, and how much happier for wife, children, and servants ; how much pleasanter for friends. Well, Guy is the question now. What do you advise ?”

The two sat far into the night discussing a problem on the solution of which depended the future of a noble boy, the happiness of a family. No wonder they found the subject so profoundly interesting that *two* by the church clock startled them into a hasty separation. Both ladies resented this dereliction on the part of their several lords. They would have been meeker than Sarah herself had they known that, not science, not politics, but the bringing up of the children, was the engrossing topic.



*Breakfast-time three days later. Scene, the dining-room.*

NURSE *in presence of* MASTER *and* MISTRESS.

“You have been a faithful servant and good friend, both to us and the children, Harriet, but we blame you a little for Guy's passionate outbreaks. Do not be offended, we blame ourselves more. Your share of blame is that you have worshipped him from his babyhood, and have allowed him to have his own way in everything. Now, your part of the cure is, to do exactly as we desire. At present, I shall only ask you to remember that, Prevention is better than cure. The thing for all of us is to take precautions against even one more of these outbreaks.

“Keep your eye upon Guy; if you notice—no matter what the cause—flushed cheeks, pouting lips, flashing eye, frowning forehead, with two little upright lines between the eyebrows, limbs held stiffly, hands, perhaps, closed, head thrown slightly back; if you notice any or all of these signs, the boy is on the verge of an outbreak. Do not stop to ask questions, or soothe him, or make peace, or threaten. Change his thoughts. That is the one hope. Say quite naturally and pleasantly, as if you saw nothing, ‘Your father wants you to garden with him,’ or, ‘for a game of dominoes;’ or, ‘your mother wants you to help her in the store-room,’ or, ‘to tidy her work-box.’ Be ruled by the time of the day, and how you know we are employed. And be quite sure we *do* want the boy.”

“But, sir, please excuse me, is it any good to save him from breaking out when the passion is there in his heart?”

“Yes, Harriet, all the good in the world. Your master thinks that Guy's passions have become a habit, and that the way to cure him is to keep him

a long time, a month or two, without a single outbreak ; if we can manage that, the trouble will be over. As for the passion in his heart, that comes with the outer signs, and both will be cured together. Do, Harriet, like a good woman, help us in this matter, and your master and I will always be grateful to you !”

“I’m sure, ma’am,” with a sob (Harriet was a soft-hearted woman, and was very much touched to be taken thus into the confidence of her master and mistress). “I’m sure I’ll do my best, especially as I’ve had a hand in it ; but I’m sure I never meant to, and, if I forget, I hope you’ll kindly forgive me.”

“No, Harriet, you must not forget, any more than you’d forget to snatch a sharp knife from the baby. This is almost a matter of life and death.”

“Very well, sir ; I’ll remember, and thank you for telling me.”

Breakfast-time was unlucky ; the very morning after the above talk, Nurse had her opportunity. Flo, for some inscrutable reason, preferred to eat her porridge with her brother’s spoon. Behold, quick as a flash, flushed cheeks, puckered brow, rigid frame !

“Master Guy, dear,” in a quite easy, friendly tone (Harriet had mastered her lesson), “run down to your father ; he wants you to help him in the garden.”

Instantly the flash in the eye became a sparkle of delight, the rigid limbs were all active and eager ; out of his chair, out of the room, downstairs, by his father’s side in less time than it takes to tell. And the face—joyous, sparkling, full of eager expectation—surely Nurse had been mistaken this time ? But no ; both parents knew how quickly Guy emerged

from the shadow of a cloud, and they trusted Harriet's discretion.

"Well, boy, so you've come to help me garden? But I've not done breakfast. Have you finished yours?"

"No, father," with a dropping lip.

"Well, I'll tell you what. You run up and eat your porridge and come down as soon as you're ready; I shall make haste, too, and we shall get a good half-hour in the garden before I go out."

Up again went Guy with hasty, willing feet.

"Nurse" (breathless hurry and importance), "I must make haste with my porridge. Father wants me *directly* to help him in the garden."

Nurse winked hard at the fact that the porridge was gobbled. The happy little boy trotted off to one of the greatest treats he knew, and that day passed without calamity.

. . . . .

"I can see it will answer, and life will be another thing without Guy's passions; but do you think, Edward, it's *right* to give the child pleasures when he's naughty—in fact, to put a premium upon naughtiness, for it amounts to that?"

"You're not quite right there. The child does not know he is naughty; the emotions of 'naughtiness' are there; he is in a physical tumult, but wilfulness has not set in; he does not yet *mean* to be naughty, and all is gained if we avert the set of the will towards wrong doing. He has not had time to recognise that he is naughty, and his thoughts are changed so suddenly that he is not in the least aware of what was going on in him before. The new thing comes to him as naturally and graciously as do all the joys

of the childish day. The question of desert does not occur."

For a week all went well. Nurse was on the alert, was quick to note the ruddy storm-signal in the fair little face; never failed to despatch him instantly, and with a quiet unconscious manner, on some errand to father or mother; nay, she improved on her instructions; when father and mother were out of the way, she herself invented some pleasant errand to cook about the pudding for dinner; to get fresh water for Dickie, or to see if Rover had had his breakfast. Nurse was really clever in inventing expedients, in hitting instantly on something to be done novel and amusing enough to fill the child's fancy. A mistake in this direction would, experience told her, be fatal; propose what was stale, and not only would Guy decline to give up the immediate gratification of a passionate outbreak—for it *is* a gratification, that must be borne in mind—but he would begin to look suspiciously on the "something else" which so often came in the way of this gratification.

Security has its own risks. A morning came when Nurse was not on the alert. Baby was teething and fractious, Nurse was overdone, and the nursery was not a cheerful place. Guy, very sensitive to the moral atmosphere about him, got, in Nurse's phrase, out of sorts. He relieved himself by drumming on the table with a couple of ninepins, just as Nurse was getting baby off after a wakeful night.

"Stop that noise this minute, you naughty boy! Don't you see your poor little brother is going to sleep?" in a loud whisper. The noise was redoubled, and assisted by kicks on chair-rungs and table-legs. Sleep vanished and baby broke into a piteous wail.

This was too much ; the Nurse laid down the child, seized the young culprit, chair and all, carried him to the furthest corner, and, desiring him not to move till she gave him leave, set him down with a vigorous shaking. There were days when Guy would stand this style of treatment cheerfully, but this was not one. Before Harriet had even noted the danger signals, the storm had broken out. For half-an-hour the nursery was a scene of frantic uproar, baby assisting, and even little Flo. Half-an-hour is nothing to speak of ; in pleasant chat, over an amusing book, the thirty minutes fly like five ; but half-an-hour in struggle with a raging child is a day and a night in length. Mr. and Mrs. Belmont were out, so Harriet had it all to herself, and it was contrary to orders that she should attempt to place the child in confinement ; solitude and locked doors involved risks that the parents would, rightly, allow no one but themselves to run. At last the tempest subsided, spent, apparently, by its own force.

A child cannot bear estrangement, disapproval ; he must needs live in the light of a countenance smiling upon him. His passion over, Guy set himself laboriously to be good, keeping watch out of the corner of his eye to see how Nurse took it. She was too much vexed to respond in any way, even by a smile. But her heart was touched ; and though, by-and-by, when Mrs. Belmont came in, she did say—"Master Guy has been in one of his worst tempers again, ma'am : screaming for better than half-an-hour"—yet she did not tell her tale with the *empressement* necessary to show what a very bad half-hour they had had. His mother looked with grave reproof at the delinquent, but she was not proof against his coaxing ways.



After dinner she remarked to her husband, "You will be sorry to hear that Guy has had one of his worst bouts again. Nurse said he screamed steadily for more than half-an-hour."

"What did you do?"

"I was out at the time, doing some shopping. But when I came back, after letting him know how grieved I was, I did as you say, changed his thoughts and did my best to give him a happy day."

"How did you let him know you were grieved?"

"I looked at him in a way he quite understood, and you should have seen the deliciously coaxing, half-ashamed look he shot up at me. What eyes he has!"

"Yes, the little monkey! and no doubt he measured their effect on his mother; you must allow me to say that my theory certainly is not to give him a happy day after an outbreak of this sort."

"Why, I thought your whole plan was to change his thoughts, to keep him so well occupied with pleasant things that he does not dwell on what agitated him."

"Yes, but did you not tell me the passion was over when you found him?"

"Quite over, he was as good as gold."

"Well, the thing we settled on was to *avert* a threatened outbreak by a pleasant change of thought; and to do so in order that, at last, the *habit* of these outbreaks may be broken. Don't you see, that is a very different thing from pampering him with a pleasant day when he has already pampered himself with the full indulgence of his passion?"

"Pampered himself! Why, you surely don't think those terrible scenes give the poor child any pleasure. I always thought he was a deal more to be pitied than we."

"Indeed I do. Pleasure is perhaps hardly the word; but that the display of temper is a form of self indulgence, there is no doubt at all. You, my dear, are too amiable to know what a relief it is to us irritable people to have a good storm and clear the air."

"Nonsense, Edward! But what should I have done? What is the best course *after* the child has given way?"

"I think we must, as you suggested before, consider how we ourselves are governed. Estrangement, isolation, are the immediate consequences of sin, even of what may seem a small sin of harshness and selfishness."

"Oh, but don't you think that is our delusion? that God is loving us all the time, and it is *we* who estrange ourselves?"

"Without doubt; and we are aware of the love all the time, but, also, we are aware of a cloud between us and it; we know we are out of favour. We know, too, there is only one way back, through the fire. It is common to speak of repentance as a light thing, rather pleasant than otherwise; but it is searching and bitter: so much so, that the Christian soul dreads to sin, even the sin of coldness, from an almost cowardly dread of the anguish of repentance, purging fire though it is."

Mrs. Belmont could not clear her throat to answer for a minute. She had never before had such a glimpse into her husband's soul. Here were deeper things in the spiritual life than any of which she yet knew.

"Well then, dear, about Guy; must he feel this estrangement, go through this fire?"

"I think so, in his small degree; but he must

never doubt our love. He must see and feel that it is always there, though under a cloud of sorrow which he only can break through."

Guy's lapse prepared the way for further lapses. Not two days passed before he was again *hors de combat*. The boy, his outbreak over, was ready at once to emerge into the sunshine. Not so his mother. His most bewitching arts met only with sad looks and silence.

He told his small scraps of nursery news, looking in vain for the customary answering smile and merry words. He sidled up to his mother, and stroked her cheek; that did not do, so he stroked her hand; then her gown; no answering touch, no smile, no word; nothing but sorrowful eyes when he ventured to raise his own. Poor little fellow! The iron was beginning to enter; he moved a step or two away from his mother, and raised to hers eyes full of piteous doubt and pleading. He saw love, which could not reach him, and sorrow, which he was just beginning to comprehend. But his mother could bear it no longer: she got up hastily and left the room. Then the little boy, keeping close to the wall, as if even that were something to interpose between him and this new sense of desolation, edged off to the furthest corner of the room, and sinking on the floor with a sad, new quietness, sobbed out lonely sobs; Nurse had had her lesson, and although she, too, was crying for her boy, nobody went near him but Flo. A little arm was passed round his neck; a hot little cheek pressed against his curls:

"Don't cry, Guy!" two or three times, and when the sobs came all the thicker, there was nothing for it but that Flo must cry too; poor little outcasts!

At last bedtime came, and his mother; but her face had still that sad, far-away look, and Guy could see she had been crying. How he longed to spring up and hug her and kiss her as he would have done yesterday. But somehow he dared not; and she never smiled nor spoke, and yet never before had Guy known how his mother loved him.

She sat in her accustomed chair by the little white bed, and beckoned the little boy in his nightgown to come and say his prayers. He knelt at his mother's knee as usual, and then she laid her hands upon him.

“‘Our Father’—oh, mother, mo—o—ther, mother!” and a torrent of tears drowned the rest, and Guy was again in his mother's arms, and she was raining kisses upon him, and crying softly with him.

Next morning his father received him with open arms.

“So my poor little boy had a bad day yesterday!”

Guy hung his head and said nothing.

“Would you like me to tell you how you may help ever having quite such another bad day?”

“Oh yes, please, father; I thought I couldn't help.”

“Can you tell when the ‘Cross-man’ is coming?”

Guy hesitated. “Sometimes, I think. I get all hot.”

“Well, the minute you find he's coming, even if you have begun to cry, say, ‘Please excuse me, Nurse,’ and run downstairs, and then four times round the garden as fast as you can, without stopping to take breath!”

“What a good way! Shall I try it now?”

“Why, the ‘Cross-man’ isn't there now. But I'll tell you a secret: he always goes away if you begin to do something else as hard as you can; and if you can remember to run away from him round the

garden, you'll find he won't run after you; at the very worst, he won't run after you more than *once* round!"

"Oh, father, I'll try! What fun! See if I don't beat him! Won't I just give Mr. 'Cross-man' a race! He shall be quite out of breath before we get round the fourth time."

The vivid imagination of the boy personified the foe, and the father jumped with his humour. Guy was eager for the fray; the parents had found an ally in their boy; the final victory was surely within appreciable distance.

. . . . .

"This is glorious, Edward; and it's as interesting as painting a picture or writing a book! What a capital device the race with Mr. 'Cross-man' is! It's like 'Sintram.' He'll be so much on the *qui vive* for 'Cross-man' that he'll forget to be cross. The only danger I see is that of many false alarms. He'll try the race, in all good faith, when there is no foe in pursuit."

"That's very likely; but it will do no harm. He is getting the habit of running away from the evil, and may for that be the more ready to run when 'tis at his heels; this, of running away from temptation, is the right principle, and may be useful to him in a thousand ways."

"Indeed, it may be a safeguard to him through life. How did you get the idea?"

"Do you remember how Rover was cured of barking after carriages? There were two stages to the cure; the habit of barking was stopped, and a new habit was put in its place; I worked upon the recognised law of association of ideas, and got Rover to associate the rumble of wheels with a newspaper in



his mouth. I tried at the time to explain how it was possible to act thus on the 'mind' of a dog."

"I recollect quite well, you said that the stuff—nervous tissue, you called it—of which the brain is made is shaped in the same sort of way—at least so I understood—by the thoughts that are in it, as the cover of a tart is shaped by the plums below. And then, when there's a place ready for them in the brain, the same sort of thoughts always come to fill it."

"I did not intend to say precisely that," said Mr. Belmont, laughing, "especially the plum part. However, it will do. Pray go on with your metaphor. It is decided that plums are not wholesome eating. You put in your thumb, and pick out a plum; and that the place may be filled, and well filled, you pop in a—a—figures fail me—a peach!"

"I see! I see! Guy's screaming fits are the unwholesome plum which we are picking out, and the running away from Cross-man the peach to be got in instead. (I don't see why it should be a peach though, unpractical man!) His brain is to grow to the shape of the peach, and behold, the place is filled. No more room for the plum."\*

"You have it; you have put, in a light way, a most interesting law, and I take much blame to myself that I never thought, until now, of applying it to Guy's case. But now I think we are making way; we have made provision for dislodging the old habit and setting a new one in its place."

"Don't you think the child will be a hero in a very

\* To state the case more accurately, certain cell connections appear to be established by habitual traffic in certain thoughts; but there is so much danger of over-stating or of localising mental operations, that perhaps it is safe to convey the practical outcome of this line of research in a more or less figurative way—as, the wearing of a field-path; the making of a bridge; a railway, &c.

small way, when he makes himself run away from his temper?"

"Not in a small way at all; the child will be a hero. But we cannot be heroes all the time. In sudden gusts of temptation, God grant him grace to play the hero, if only through hasty flight; but in what are called besetting sins, there is nothing safe but the contrary besetting good habit. And here is where parents have such infinite power over the future of their children."

"Don't think me superstitious and stupid; but somehow this scientific training, good as I see it is, seems to me to undervalue the help we get from above in times of difficulty and temptation."

"Let me say that it is you who undervalue the virtue, and limit the scope of the Divine action. Whose are the laws Science labours to reveal? Whose are the works, body or brain, or what you like, upon which these laws act?"

"How foolish of me! How one gets into a way of thinking that God cares only for what we call spiritual things. Let me ask you one more question. I do see that all this watchful training is necessary, and do not wish to be idle or cowardly about it. But don't you think Guy would grow out of these violent tempers naturally, as he gets older?"

"Well, he would not, as youth or man, fling himself on the ground and roar; but no doubt he would grow up touchy, fiery, open at any minute to a sudden storm of rage. The man who has too much self-respect for an open exhibition may, as you know well enough, poor wife, indulge in continual irritability, suffer himself to be annoyed by trifling matters. No, there is nothing for it but to look upon an irate habit as one to be displaced by a contrary habit.

Who knows what cheerful days we may yet have, and whether in curing Guy I may not cure myself? The thing can be done; only one is so lazy about one's own habits. Suppose you take me in hand?"

"Oh, I couldn't! and yet it's your only fault, dear."

"Only fault! well, we'll see. In the meantime there's another thing I wish we could do for Guy—stop him in the midst of an outbreak. Do you remember the morning we found him admiring himself in the glass?"

"Yes, with the photograph in his hand."

"That was it; perhaps the Cross-man race will answer even in the middle of a tempest. If not, we must try something else."

"It won't work."

"Why not?"

"Guy will have no more rages; how then can he be stopped in mid-tempest?"

"Most hopeful of women! But don't deceive yourself. Our work is only well begun, but that, let us hope, is half done."

His father was right. Opportunities to check him in mid-career occurred; and Guy answered to the rein. Mr. Cross-man worked wonders. A record of outbreaks was kept; now a month intervened; two months; a year; two years; and at last his parents forgot their early troubles with their sweet-tempered, frank-natured boy.

## CHAPTER II

### ATTENTION.

“BUT now for the real object of this letter (does it take your breath away to get four sheets?) We want you to help us about Kitty. My husband and I are at our wits' end, and should most thankfully take your wise head and kind heart into counsel. I fear we have been laying up trouble for ourselves and for our little girl. The ways of nature are, there is no denying it, very attractive in all young creatures, and it is so delightful to see a child do as 'tis its nature to,' that you forget that Nature, left to herself, produces a waste, be it never so lovely. Our little Kitty's might so easily become a wasted life.

“But not to prose any more, let me tell you the history of Kitty's yesterday—one of her days is like the rest, and you will be able to see where we want your help.

“Figure to yourself the three little heads bent over 'copy-books' in our cheery schoolroom. Before a line is done, up starts Kitty.

“‘Oh, mother, may I write the next copy—s h e l l ? “Shell” is so much nicer than—k n o w, and I'm so tired of it.’

“‘How much have you done?’

“‘I have written it three whole times, mother, and I really *can't* do it any more! I think I could do—s h e l l. “Shell” is so pretty!’

“By-and-by we read ; but Kitty cannot read — can’t even spell the words (don’t scold us, we know it is quite wrong to spell in a reading lesson), because all the time her eyes are on a smutty sparrow on the topmost twig of the poplar ; so she reads, ‘W i t h, birdie !’ We do sums ; a short line of addition is to poor Kitty a hopeless and an endless task. ‘Five and three make—nineteen,’ is her last effort, though she knows quite well how to add up figures. Half a scale on the piano, and then—eyes and ears for everybody’s business but her own. Three stitches of hemming, and idle fingers plait up the hem or fold the duster in a dozen shapes. I am in the midst of a thrilling history talk : ‘So the Black Prince——’ ‘Oh, mother, do you think we shall go to the sea this year ? My pail is quite ready, all but the handle, but I can’t find my spade *anywhere !*’

“And thus we go on, pulling Kitty through her lessons somehow ; but it is a weariness to herself and all of us, and I doubt if the child learns anything except by bright flashes. But you have no notion how quick the little monkey is. After idling through a lesson she will overtake us at a bound at the last moment, and thus escape the wholesome shame of being shown up as the dunce of our little party.

“Kitty’s dawdling ways, her restless desire for change of occupation, her always wandering thoughts, lead to a good deal of friction, and spoil our school-room party, which is a pity, for I want the children to enjoy their lessons from the very first. What do you think the child said to me yesterday in the most coaxing pretty way ? ‘There are so many things nicer than lessons ! Don’t you think so, mother ?’ Yes, dear aunt, I see you put your finger on those unlucky words ‘coaxing, pretty way,’ and you look, if you do



not say, that awful sentence of yours about sin being bred of allowance. Isn't that it? It is quite true; we are in fault. Those butterfly ways of Kitty's were delicious to behold until we thought it time to set her to work, and then we found that we should have been training her from her babyhood. Well,

'If you break your plaything yourself, dear,  
Don't you cry for it all the same?  
I don't think it is such a comfort  
To have only oneself to blame.'

So, like a dear, kind aunt, don't scold us, but help us to do better. Is Kitty constant to anything? you ask. Does she stick to any of the '*many* things so much nicer than lessons'? I am afraid that here, too, our little girl is 'unstable as water.' And the worst of it is, she is all agog to be at a thing, and then, when you think her settled to half-an-hour's pleasant play, off she is like any butterfly. She says her, 'How doth the little busy bee,' dutifully, but when I tell her she is not a bit like a busy bee, but rather like a foolish, flitting butterfly, I'm afraid she rather likes it, and makes up to the butterflies as if they were akin to her, and were having just the good time she would prefer. But you must come and see the child to understand how volatile she is.

"'Oh, mother, *please* let me have a good doll's wash this afternoon; I'm quite unhappy about poor Peggy! I really think she *likes* to be dirty!'

"Great preparations follow in the way of little tub, and soap, and big apron; the little laundress sits down, greatly pleased with herself, to undress her dirty Peggy; but hardly is the second arm out of its sleeve, than, *presto!* a new idea; off goes Kitty to clean out her doll's-house, deaf to all nurse's remonstrances about 'nice hot water,' and 'poor dirty Peggy.'

“I’m afraid the child is no more constant to her loves than to her play ; she is a loving little soul, as you know, and is always adoring somebody. Now it’s her father, now Juno, now me, now Hugh ; and the rain of warm kisses, the soft clasping arms, the nestling head, are delicious, whether to dog or man. But, alas ! Kitty’s blandishments are a whistle you must pay for ; to-morrow it is somebody else’s turn, and the bad part is that she has only room for one at a time. If we could get a little visit from you, now, Kitty would be in your pocket all day long ; and we, even Peggy, would be left out in the cold. But do not flatter yourself it would last ; I think none of Kitty’s attachments has been known to last longer than two days.

“If the chief business of parents is to train *character* in their children, we have done nothing for Kitty ; at six years old the child has no more power of application, no more habit of attention, is no more able to make herself do the thing she ought to do, indeed, has no more desire to do the right thing, than she had at six months old. We are getting very unhappy about it. My husband feels strongly that parents should labour at character as the Hindoo gold-beater labours at his vase ; that *character* is the one thing we are called upon to effect. And what have we done for Kitty ? We have turned out a ‘fine animal,’ and are glad and thankful for that ; but that is all ; the child is as wayward, as unsteady, as a young colt. Do help us, dear aunt. Think our little girl’s case over ; if you can, get at the source of the mischief, and send us a few hints for our guidance, and we shall be yours gratefully evermore.”

“And now for my poor little great-niece ! Her

mother piles up charges against her, but how interesting and amusing and like the free world of fairy-land it would all be were it not for the *tendencies* which, in these days, we talk much about and watch little against. We bring up our children in the easiest, happy-go-lucky way, and all the time talk solemnly in big words about the momentous importance of every influence brought to bear upon them. But it is true; these naughty, winsome ways of Kitty's will end in her growing up like half the 'girls'—that is, young women—one meets. They talk glibly on many subjects; but test them, and they know nothing of any; they are ready to undertake anything, but they carry nothing through. This week, So-and-so is their most particular friend, next week such another; even their amusements, their one real interest, fail and flag; but then, there is some useful thing to be learnt—how to set tiles or play the banjo! And, all the time, there is no denying, as you say, that this very fickleness has a charm, so long as the glamour of youth lasts, and the wayward girl has bright smiles and winning, graceful ways to disarm you with. But youth does not last; and the poor girl, who began as a butterfly, ends as a grub, tied to the earth by the duties she never learnt how to fulfil; that is, supposing she is a girl with a conscience; wanting that, she dances through life whatever befalls; children, husband, home, must take their chance. 'What a giddy old grandmother the Peterfields have!' remarked a pert young man of my acquaintance. But, indeed, the 'giddy old grandmother' is not an unknown quantity.

"Are you saying to yourself, a prosy old 'great-aunt' is as bad as a 'giddy old grandmother'? I really have prosed abominably, but Kitty has been on my mind all the time, and it is quite true, you must take her in hand.

“First, as to her lessons: you *must* help her to gain the power of attention; that should have been done long ago, but better late than never, and an aunt who has given her mind to these matters takes blame to herself for not having seen the want sooner. ‘But,’ I fancy you are saying, ‘if the child has no faculty of attention, how can we give it to her? It’s just a natural defect.’ Not a bit of it! Attention is not a faculty at all, though I believe it is worth more than all the so-called faculties put together; this, at any rate, is true, that no talent, no genius, is worth much without the power of attention; and this is the power which makes men or women successful in life.

“Attention is no more than this—the power of giving your mind to what you are about—the bigger the better so far as the mind goes, and great minds do great things; but have you never known a person with a great mind, ‘real genius,’ his friends say, who goes through life without accomplishing anything? It is just because he wants the power to ‘turn on,’ so to speak, the whole of his great mind; he is unable to bring the whole of his power to bear on the subject in hand. ‘But Kitty?’ Yes, Kitty must get this power of ‘turning on.’ She must be taught to give her mind to sums and reading, and even to dusters. Go slowly; a little to-day and a little more to-morrow. In the first place, her lessons must be made *interesting*. Do not let her scramble through a page of ‘reading,’ for instance, spelling every third word and then waiting to be told what it spells, but see that every day she learns a certain number of new words—six, twelve, twenty, as she is able to hear them; not ‘spellings’—terrible invention!—but words that occur in a few lines of some book of stories or rhymes;

and these she should know, not by spelling, but by *sight*. It does not matter whether the new words be long or short, in one syllable or in four, but let them be *interesting* words. For instance, suppose her task for to-day be 'Little Jack Horner,' she should learn to know, *by sight*, thumb, plum, Christmas, corner, &c., before she begins to read the rhyme; make 'plum,' with her loose letters, print it on her slate, let her find it elsewhere in her book, any device you can think of, so that 'plum' is brought before her eyes half-a-dozen times, and each time recognised and named. Then, when it comes in the reading lesson, it is an old friend, read off with delight. Let every day bring the complete mastery of a few new words, as well as the keeping up of the old ones. At the rate of only six a day she will learn, say, fifteen hundred in a year; in other words, she will have learned to read! And if it do not prove to be reading without tears and reading with *attention*, I shall not presume to make another suggestion about the dear little girl's education.

"But do not let the lesson last more than ten minutes, and insist, with brisk, bright determination, on the child's full concentrated attention of eye and mind for the whole ten minutes. Do not allow a moment's dawdling at lessons.

"I would not give her rows of figures to add yet; use dominoes or the domino cards prepared for the purpose, the point being to add or subtract the dots on the two halves in a twinkling. You will find that the three can work together at this as at the reading, and the children will find it as exciting and delightful as 'old soldier.' Kitty will be all alive here, and will take her share of work merrily; and this is a point gained. Do not, if you can help it, single the little



maid out from the rest and throw her on her own responsibility. 'Tis a 'heavy and a weary weight' for the bravest of us, and the little back will get a trick of bending under life if you do not train her to carry it lightly, as an Eastern woman her pitcher.

"Then, vary the lessons; now head, and now hands; now tripping feet and tuneful tongue; but in every lesson let Kitty and the other two carry away the joyous sense of—

'Something attempted, something done.'

"Allow of no droning wearily over the old stale work,—which must be kept up all the time, it is true, but rather by way of an exciting game than as the lesson of the day, which should always be a distinct *step* that the children can recognise.

"You have no notion, until you try, how the 'now-or-never' feeling about a lesson quickens the attention of even the most volatile child; what you can drone through all day, you will; what *must* be done, is done. Then, there is a by-the-way gain besides that of quickened attention. I once heard a wise man say that, if he must choose between the two, he would rather his child should learn the meaning of 'must' than inherit a fortune. And here you will be able to bring moral force to bear on wayward Kitty. Every lesson must have its own time, and no other time in this world is there for it. The sense of the preciousness of time, of the irreparable loss when a ten minutes' lesson is thrown away, must be brought home.

"Let your own unaffected distress at the loss of 'golden minutes' be felt by the children, and also be visited upon them by the loss of some small childish pleasure which the day should have held. It is a

sad thing to let a child dawdle through a day and be let off scot-free. You see, I am talking of the children, and not of Kitty alone, because it is so much easier to be good in company; and what is good for her will be good for the trio.

“But there are other charges: poor Kitty is neither steady in play nor steadfast in love! May not the *habit* of attending to her lessons help her to stick to her play? Then, encourage her. ‘What! The doll’s tea-party over! That’s not the way grown-up ladies have tea; they sit and talk for a long time. See if you can make your tea-party last twenty minutes by my watch!’ This failing of Kitty’s is just a case where a little gentle ridicule might do a great deal of good. It is a weapon to be handled warily, for one child may resent, and another take pleasure in being laughed at; but managed with tact I do believe it’s good for children and grown-ups to see the comic side of their doings.

“I think we err in not enough holding up certain virtues for our children’s admiration. Put a premium of praise on every finished thing, if it is only a house of cards. Steadiness in work is a step on the way towards steadfastness in love. Here, too, the praise of constancy might very well go with good-humoured family ‘chaff,’ not about the new loves, which are lawful, whether of kitten or playmate, but about the discarded old loves. Let Kitty and all of them grow up to glory in their constancy to every friend.

“There, I am sending you a notable preachment instead of the few delicate hints I meant to offer; but never mount a woman on her hobby—who knows when she will get off again?”

## CHAPTER III

### *AN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT*

YOU wish me to tell you the story of my little girl? Well, to begin at the beginning. In looking back through the pages of my journal I find many scattered notices of Agnes, and I always write of her, I find, as "poor Agnes." Now, I wonder why? The child is certainly neither unhealthy nor unhappy—at least, not with any reason; but again and again I find this sort of entry:—

"Agnes displeased with her porridge; says nothing, but looks black all day."

"Harry upset his sister's work-basket, by accident, I truly believe, but she can't get over it; speaks to no one, and looks as if under a cloud."

I need not go on; the fact is, the child is sensible of many injuries heaped upon her; I think there is no ground for the feeling, for she is really very sweet when she has not, as the children say, the black dog on her back.

It is quite plain to me, and to others also, I think, that we have let this sort of thing go on too long without dealing with it. We must take the matter in hand.

Please God, our little Agnes must not grow up in this sullen habit, for all our sakes, but chiefly for her own, poor child; I felt that in this matter I might be of more use than Edward, who simply does not

understand a temper less sunny and open than his own. I pondered and pondered, and, at last, some light broke in upon me. I thought I should get hold of one principle at a time, work that out thoroughly, and then take up the next, and so on, until all the springs of sullenness were exhausted, and all supplies from without stopped. I was beginning to suspect that the laws of habit worked here as elsewhere, and that, if I could get our dear child to pass, say, six weeks without a "fallen countenance," she might lose this distressing failing for life.

I meant to take most of the trouble of this experiment upon myself, but somehow I never can do anything without consulting my husband. I think men have clearer heads than we women; that is, they can see *both* sides of a question and are not carried off their feet by the one side presented to them.

"Well, Edward, our little Agnes does not get over her sulky fits; in fact, they last longer, and are harder to get out of than ever!"

"Poor little girl! It is unhappy for her and for all of us. But don't you think it is a sort of childish *malaise* she will soon grow out of?"

"Now, have you not said, again and again, that a childish fault, left to itself, can do no other than strengthen?"

"True; I suppose the fact is I am slow to realise the fault. But you are right. From the point of view of *habit* we are pledged to deal with it. Have you made any plans?"

"Yes; I have been trying to work the thing out on your lines. We must watch the rise of the sullen cloud, and change her thoughts before she has time to realise that the black fit is coming."

“You are right ; if we can keep the child for only a week without this settling of the cloud, the mere habit would be somewhat broken.”

We had not to wait for our opportunity. At breakfast next day—whether Harry’s porridge looked more inviting than her own, or whether he should not have been helped first, or whether the child had a little pain of which she was hardly aware—suddenly, her eyes fell, brows dropped, lips pouted, the whole face became slightly paler than before, the figure limp, limbs lax, hands nerveless—and our gentle child was transformed, become entirely unlovable. So far, her feelings were in the emotional stage ; her injury, whatever it was, had not yet taken shape in her thoughts ; she could not have told you what was the matter, because she did not know ; but very soon the thinking brain would come to the aid of the quick emotions, and then she would be sulky of fixed purpose. Her father saw the symptoms rise and knew what that would lead to, and, with the promptness which has often saved us, he cried out—

“Agnes, come here, and hold up your pinafore !” and Agnes trotted up to his side, her pinafore held up very much to receive the morning dole of crumbs for the birds ; presently, she came back radiant with the joy of having given the birds a good breakfast, and we had no more sulky fits that day. This went on for a fortnight or so, with fair but not perfect success. Whenever her father or I was present, we caught the emotion before the child was conscious of it, and succeeded in turning her thoughts into some pleasant channel. But poor nurse has had bad hours with Agnes ; there would sit the child, pale and silent, for hours together, doing nothing because she liked to do it, but only because she was made. And, once



the fit had settled down, thick and steady as a London fog, neither her father nor I could help in the least. Oh, the inconceivable settled cloudiness and irresponsiveness of that sweet child face !

Our tactics were at fault. No doubt they helped so far as they went. We managed to secure bright days that might otherwise have been cloudy when we happened to be present at the first rise of the sullen mood. But it seemed impossible to bring about so long an abstinence from sullen fits as would eradicate the *habit*. We pictured to ourselves the dreary life that lay before our pretty little girl ; the sort of insulation, the distrust of her sweetness, to which even one such sullen fit would give rise ; worse, the isolation which accompanies this sort of temper, and the anguish of repentance to follow. And then, I know, madness is often bred of this strong sense of injured personality.

It is not a pleasant thing to look an evil in the face. Whether or no "a little knowledge is a dangerous," certainly, it is a trying thing. If we could only have contented ourselves with, "Oh, she'll grow out of it by-and-by," we could have put up with even a daily cloud. But these forecasts of our little girl's future made the saving of the child at *any* cost our most anxious care.

"I'll tell you what, Mary ; we must strike out a new line. In a general way, I do believe it's best to deal with a child's faults without making him aware that he has them. It fills the little beings with a ridiculous sense of importance to have anything belonging to *them*, even a fault. But in this case, I think, we shall have to strike home and deal with *the cause* at least as much as with *the effects*, and that, chiefly, because we have not effects entirely under our control."

“But, Edward, what if there is no cure? What if this odious temper were *hereditary*—our precious child’s inheritance from those who should have brought her only good?”

“Poor little wife! so this is how it looks to you. You women are sensitive creatures. Why, do you know, it never occurred to me that it might be all *my* fault. Well, I will not laugh at the fancy. Let us take it seriously, even if, as it seems to me, a little morbid. Let us suppose that this sad sullenness of which I hear so much and see so little, is, indeed, Agnes’s inheritance from her mother—may she only inherit all the rest, and happy the man whose life she blesses! The question is not ‘How has it come?’ but ‘How are we to deal with it?’—equally, you and I. Poor things! It’s but a very half-and-half kind of matrimony if each is to pick out his or her own particular bundle of failings, and deal with it single-handed. This poor man finds the prospect too much for him! As a matter of fact, though, I believe that every failing of mind, body, temper, and what not, is a matter of inheritance, and that each parent’s particular business in life is to pass his family forward freed from that particular vicious tendency which has been his own bane—or hers, if you prefer it.”

“Well, dear, do as you will; I feel that you know best. What it would be in these days of greater insight to be married to a man who would say, ‘There, that boy may thank his mother’ for this or the other failure. Of course, the thing is done now, but more often than not as a random guess.”

“To return to Agnes. I think we shall have to show her to herself in this matter, to rake up the ugly feeling, however involuntary, and let her see how hateful it

is. Yes, I do not wonder you shrink from this. So do I. It will destroy the child's unconsciousness."

"Oh, Edward, how I dread to poke into the poor little wounded heart, and bring up worse things to startle her!"

"I am sorry for you, dear, but I think it must be done; and don't you think you are the person to do it? While they have a mother I don't think I could presume to poke too much into the secrets of the children's hearts."

"I'll try; but if I get into a mess you must help me through."

The opportunity came soon enough. It was pears this time. Harry would never have known whether he had the biggest or the least. But we had told nurse to be especially careful in this matter. "Each of the children must have the biggest or best as often as one another, but there must be no fuss, no taking turns, about such trifles. Therefore, very rightly, you gave Harry the bigger and Agnes the smaller pear."

Agnes's pear was not touched; there the child sat, without word or sob, but all gathered into herself, like a sea anemone whose tentacles have been touched. The stillness, whiteness, and brooding sullenness of the face, the limp figure and desolate attitude, would have made me take the little being to my heart if I had not too often failed to reach her in this way. This went on all day, all of us suffering; and in the evening, when I went to hear the children's prayers before bed, I meant to have it out.

We were both frozen up with sadness, and the weary little one was ready to creep into her mother's heart again. But I must not let her yet.

"So my poor Agnes has had a very sad day?"

“Yes, mother,” with a little quivering sob.

“And do you know we have all had a very sad day,—father, mother, your little brother, nurse—every one of us has felt as if a black curtain had been hung up to shut out the sunshine?”

The child was sympathetic, and shivered at the sight of the black curtain and the warm sunshine shut out.

“And do you know who has put us all out in the dark and the cold? Our little girl drew the curtain, because she would not speak to any of us, or be kind to any of us, or love any of us all the day long; so we could not get into the sunshine, and have been shivering and sad in the cold.”

“Mother, mother!” with gasping sobs; “*not* you and father?”

“Ah! I thought my little girl would be sorry. Now let us try to find out how it all happened. Is it possible that Agnes noticed that her brother’s pear was larger than her own?”

“Oh, mother, how could I?” And the poor little face was hidden in her mother’s breast, and the outbreak of sobs that followed was too painful. I feared it might mean actual illness for the sensitive little soul. I think it was the right thing to do; but I had barely courage enough to leave the results in more loving hands.

“Never mind; don’t cry any more, darling, and we will ask our Father above to forgive and forget all about it. Mother knows that her dear little Agnes will try not to love herself best any more. And then the black curtain will never fall, and we shall never again be a whole long day standing sadly out in the cold. Good-night from mother, and another sweet good-night from father.”

The treatment seems to answer. On the slightest return of the old sullen symptoms we show our little girl what they mean. But the grief that follows is so painful that I'm afraid we could not go on with it for the sake of the child's health. But, happily, we very rarely see a sulky face now; and when we do we turn and look upon our child, and the look melts her, until she is all gentleness, penitence, and love.



## CHAPTER IV

### *DOROTHY ELMORE'S ACHIEVEMENT: A FORECAST*

#### PART I

I KNOW of no happier moment for parents than that when their eldest daughter returns from school to take her place finally by her mother's side. It was two years that very day since we had seen Dorothy when her father set out for Lausanne to bring her home; and how the children and I got through the few days of his absence, I don't know. The last touches had been put, many times over, to her rooms—not the plain little room she had left, but a dainty bower for our young maiden, a little sitting-room opening into a pure nest of a bedroom. Our eyes met, her father's and mine, and moistened as we conjured up I don't know what visions of pure young life to be lived there, the virginal prayers to be offered at the little prayer table, the gaiety of heart that should, from this nook, bubble over the house, and, who knows, by-and-by, the dreams of young love which should come to glorify the two little rooms.

Two or three times already had the children put fresh flowers into everything that would hold a flower. Pretty frocks and sweet faces, bright hair and bright eyes, had been ready this long time to meet sister Dorothy.

At last, a telegram from Dover—"Home by five"

—and our restlessness subsided into a hush of expectation.

The sound of wheels on the gravel, and we flew to the hall door and stood in two files, children and maids, Rover and Floss, waiting to welcome the child of the house. Then, a lovely face, glad to tears, looking out of a nest of furs; then, a light leap, almost before the carriage drew up, and I had her in my arms, my Dorothy, the child of my heart! The order of the day was "high tea," to which every one, down to baby May, sat up. We two, her father and I, gave her up to the children, only exchanging notes by the species of telegraphy married folk understand.

"Indubitably lovely!" said her father's eyes; "And what grace—what an elegant girl she is!" answered mine; "And do but see what tact she shows with the little ones;" "And notice the way she has with us, as if her heart were brimming with reverence and affection." Thus, we two with our eyes. For a week or more we could not settle down. As it was the Christmas holidays, we had not Miss Grimshaw to keep us in order, and so it happened that wherever Dorothy ran,—no, she went with a quick noiseless step, but never ran,—about the house to find out the old dear nooks, we all followed; a troop of children with their mother in the rear; their father too, if he happened to be in. Truly we were a ridiculous family, and did our best to turn the child's head. Every much has its more-so. Dorothy's two special partisans were Elsie, our fifteen years old girl, fast treading in her sister's steps, and Herbert, our eldest son, soon to go to college. Elsie would come to my room and discourse by the hour, her text being ever, "Dorothy says." And as for Herbs, it was

pleasant to see his budding manhood express itself in all sorts of little attentions to his lovely sister.

For lovely she was ; there could not be two opinions on that point. A lilymaid, tall and graceful, without a trace of awkwardness or self consciousness ; the exquisite complexion of the Elmores (they are a Devonshire family), warm, lovely rose on pearly white, no hint of brunette colouring ; a smile which meant spring and love and other good things ; and deep blue eyes reflecting the light of her smile.

Never, not even during the raptures of early married life, have I known a month of such joyous exhilaration as that which followed Dorothy's return, and I think her father would own as much.

What a month it was ! There was the pleasant earthly joy of going to town to get frocks for Dorothy ; then the bewilderment of not being able to find out what suited her best.

"Anything becomes her !" exclaims *Mdme. la Modiste* ; "that figure, that complexion, may wear anything."

And then, the pleasure of entering a room—all eyes bent upon us in kindness ; our dear old friends hurrying forward to make much of the child ; the deference and gentleness of her manner to these, and the warmth with which she was received by her compeers, both maidens and men ; her grace in the dance ; her simplicity in conversation ; the perfection of her manner, which was not manner at all, but her own nature, in every situation. After all, she liked best to be at home ; was more amiable and lovely with father and mother, brothers and sisters, than with the most fascinating strangers. Our good child ! We had grown a little shy of speaking to her about the best things, but we knew

she said her prayers : how else this outflow of sweet maiden life upon us all ?

I can imagine these ramblings of mine falling into the hands of a young pair whose life is in each other :—“Oh, only the outpourings of a doting mother !” and they toss the pages aside. But never believe, young people, that yours are the only ecstatic moments, yours the only experiences worth recording ; wait and see.

## PART II

These happy days had lasted for a month or more, when, one bright day in February, I remember it well, a little cloud arose. This is how it was : Dorothy had promised Elsie that she would drive her in the pony-carriage to Banford to choose a doll for May's birthday. Now, it happened that I wanted the little carriage to take to my “Mothers” at Ditchling the clothing I had bought in London with their club money. My errand could not be deferred ; it must be done that day or a week later. But I did not see why the children's commission would not do as well to-morrow ; and so I said, in good faith, as I was stepping into the carriage, hardly noticing the silence with which my remark was received.

I came home tired, after a long afternoon, looking forward to the welcome of the girls. The two seniors were sitting in the firelight, bright enough just then to show me Dorothy sitting limp and pale in a low chair, and Elsie watching her with a perplexed and anxious expression. Dorothy did look up to say, “Are you tired, mother ?” but only her eyes looked, there was nothing behind them.

"*You* look tired and cold enough, my dear; what has been the matter?"

"Oh, I'm very well, thank you; but I am tired, I think I'll go to bed." And she held up a cold cheek for the mother's kiss for which she offered no return.

Elsie and I gazed at one another in consternation; our fairy princess, our idol (was it indeed so?) What had come to her?

"What is the matter with Dorothy? Has she a headache?"

"Oh, mother, I don't know," said the poor child, on the verge of tears. "She has been like this ever since you went, saying 'Yes,' and 'No,' and 'No, thank you,' quite kindly, but never saying a word of herself. Has any one been grieving our Dorothy, or is she going to be ill? Oh, mother, mother!"

"Nay, child, don't cry. Dorothy is overdone; you know she has been out twice this week, and three times last, and late hours don't suit her. We must take better care of her, that's all."

Elsie was comforted, but not so her mother. I believed every word I had said to the child; but all the time there was a stir in my heart like the rustling of a snake in the grass. But I put it from me.

It was with a hidden fear that I came down to breakfast. Dorothy was in the room already doing the little duties of the breakfast table. But she was pale and still; her hands moved, her figure hung, in the limp way I had noticed the night before. Her cheek, a cold "Good-morning, mother," and a smile on her lips that brought no light to her eyes, was all the morning salutation I got. Breakfast was an uncomfortable, constrained meal. The children wondered what was the matter, and nobody knew.



Her father got on best with Dorothy for he knew nothing of the evening's history, so he petted her as usual, making all the more of her for her pale looks.

For a whole week this went on, and never once was I allowed to meet Dorothy eye to eye. The children were hardly better served, for they, too, had noticed something amiss; only her father could win any of the old friendliness, because he treated her as the Dorothy who had come home to us, only a little done up.

"We must have the doctor for that child, wife. Don't you see how she is losing flesh, and how the roses she brought home are fading? She has no appetite and no spirits. But, why, you surely don't think our dainty moth has burned her wings already? There's nobody here, unless it's young Gardiner, and she would never waste herself on a gawky lad like that!"

This was a new idea, and I stopped a moment to consider, for I knew of at least half-a-dozen young men who had been attentive to Dorothy, all to be preferred to this hobbledehoy young Gardiner. But, no! I could trace the change from the moment of my return from Ditchling. But I jumped at the notion of the doctor; it would, at any rate, take her out of herself, and—we should see.

The doctor came; said she wanted tone; advised, not physic, but fresh air, exercise, and early hours. So we all laid ourselves out to obey his directions that day, but with no success to speak of.

But the next was one of those glorious February days when every twig is holding itself stiffly in the pride of coming leafage, and the snowdrops in the garden beds lift dainty heads out of the brown earth.

The joy of the spring did it. We found her in the breakfast-room, snowdrops at her throat, rosy, beaming, joyous; a greeting, sweet and tender, for each, and never had we known her talk so sparkling, her air so full of dainty freshness. There was no relapse after this sudden cure. Our good friend Dr. Evans called again, to find her in such flourishing health that ten minutes' raillery of "my poor patient" was the only attention he thought necessary. But, "H'm! Mighty sudden cure!" as he was going out, showed that he too found something odd in this sudden change.

In a day or two we had forgotten all about our bad week. All went well for awhile. At the end of five weeks, however, we were again pulled up—another attack of sudden indisposition, so outsiders thought. What did I think? Well, my thoughts were not enviable.

"Father, I wish you would call at Walker's and choose me some flowers for this evening." It was the evening of the Brisbanes' dance, and I had half an idea that Arthur Brisbane had made some impression on Dorothy. His state of mind was evident enough. But, without thinking twice, I interrupted with—

"Don't you think what we have in the 'house' will do, dear? What could make up better than stephanotis and maidenhair?"

Dorothy made no answer, and her father, thinking all was right, went off at once; he was already rather late. We thought no more of the matter for a minute or two, when, at the same moment, Elsie and I found our eyes fixed upon Dorothy. The former symptoms followed—days of pallor and indisposition, which were, at the same time, days of estrangement from us all. Again we had in Dr. Evans, "just to look at

her," and this time I noticed—not without a foolish mother's resentment—that his greeting was other than cordial, "Well, young lady, and what's gone amiss this time?" he said, knitting his bushy brows, and gazing steadily at her out of the eyes which could be keen as well as kind. Dorothy flushed and fidgeted under his gaze, but gave only the cold unsatisfactory replies we had been favoured with. The prescription was as before; but again the recovery was sudden, and without apparent cause.

### PART III

To make a long story short, this sort of thing went on, at longer or shorter intervals, through all that winter and summer and winter again. My husband, in the simplicity of his nature, could see nothing but—

"The child is out of sorts; we must take her abroad for a month or two; she wants change of air and scene."

The children were quicker-eyed; children are always quick to resent unevenness of temper in those about them. A single angry outbreak, harsh word, and you may lay yourself out to please them for months before they will believe in you again. Georgie was the first to let the cat out of the bag.

"Dorothy is in a sulky fit again, mother; I wish she wouldn't!"

Elsie, who has her father's quick temper, was in the room.

"You naughty ungrateful little boy, you! How can you say such a thing of Dorothy? Didn't she sit all yesterday morning making sails for your boat?"

Georgie, a little mollified, "Yes, but why need she

be sulky to-day? We all loved her yesterday, and I'm sure I want to to-day!"

Now that the mask was fallen and even the children could see what was amiss, I felt that the task before me must not be put off. I had had great misgivings since the first exhibition of Dorothy's sullen temper; now I saw what must be done, and braced myself for a heavy task. But I could not act alone; I must take my husband into my confidence, and that was the worst of it.

"George, how do you account for Dorothy's fits of wretchedness?"

"Why, my dear, haven't I told you? The child is out of sorts, and must have change. We'll have a little trip up the Rhine, and perhaps into Switzerland, so soon as the weather is fit. It will be worth something to see her face light up at some things I mean to show her!"

"I doubt if there is anything the matter with her health; remember how perfectly well and happy she is between these fits of depression."

"What is it, then? You don't think she's in love, do you?"

"Not a bit of it; her heart is untouched, and her dearest loves are home loves."

My husband blew his nose, with a "Bless the little girl! I could find it in my heart to wish it might always be so with her. But what is your notion? I can see you have got to the bottom of the little mystery. Trust you women for seeing through a stone wall."

"Each attack of what we have called 'poorliness' has been a fit of sullenness, lasting sometimes for days, sometimes for more than a week, and passing off as suddenly as it came."

My dear husband's face clouded with serious displeasure ; never before had it worn such an expression for me. I had a sense of separation from him, as if we two, who had so long been one, were two once more.

"This is an extraordinary charge for a mother to bring against her child. How have you come to this conclusion ?"

Already was my husband become my judge. He did not see that I was ill, agitated, still standing, and hardly able to keep my feet. And there was worse to come : how was I to go through with it ?

"What causes for resentment can Dorothy conceivably have ?" he repeated, in the same cold judicial tone.

"It is possible to feel resentment, it is possible to nurse resentment, to let it hang as a heavy cloud-curtain between you and all you love the best, without any adequate cause, without any cause that you can see yourself when the fit is over !"

My voice sounded strange and distant in my own ears : I held by the back of a chair to steady myself : but I was not fainting : I was acutely alive to all that was passing in my husband's mind. He looked at me curiously, inquisitively, but not as if I belonged to him, and were part and parcel of his life.

"You seem to be curiously familiar with a state of feeling which I should have judged to be the last a Christian lady would know anything about."

"Oh, my husband, don't you see ? You are killing me. I am not going through this anguish for nothing. I *do* know what it is. And if Dorothy, my poor child, suffers, it is all my fault ! There is nothing bad in her but what she has got from me."

George was moved ; he put his arm round me in



time to save me. But I was not surprised, a few days later, to find my first grey hairs. If that hour were to be repeated, I think I could not bear it.

“Poor wife! I see; it is to yourself you have been savagely cruel, and not to our little girl. Forgive me, dear, that I did not understand at once; but we men are slow and dull. I suppose you are putting yourself (and me too) to all this pain because there is something to be gained by it. You see some way out of the difficulty, if there is one!”

“Don’t say ‘if there is one.’ How could I go through all this pain if I did not think some way of helping our darling would come out of it?”

“Ah! appearances were against you, but I knew you loved the child all the time. Clumsy wretch that I am, how could I doubt it? But, to my mind, there are two difficulties: First, I cannot believe that you ever cherished a thought of resentment; and next, who could associate such a feeling with our child’s angelic countenance? No, my dear; believe me, you are suffering under a morbid fancy. ’Tis you, and not Dorothy, who need entire change of scene and thought.”

How should I convince him? And how again run the risk of his even momentary aversion? But if Dorothy were to be saved, the thing must be done. And, oh, how could he for a moment suppose that I should deal unlovingly with my firstborn? “Be patient with me, George. I want to tell you everything from the beginning.

“Do you remember when you wooed me in the shady paths of our old rectory garden, how I tried hard to show you that I was not the loved and lovely home-daughter you pictured? I told you how I was cross about this and that; how little things put me

out for days, so that I was under a cloud, and really *couldn't* speak to, or care about anybody; how, not I, but (forgive the word) my plain sister Helen, was the beloved child of the house, adored by the children, by my parents, by all the folk of the village, who must in one way or other have dealings with the parson's daughters. Do you recollect any of this?"

"Yes, but what of it? I have never for a moment rued my choice, nor wished that it had fallen on our good Helen, kindest of friends to us and ours."

"And you, dear heart, put all I said down to generosity and humility; every effort I made to show you the truth was put down to the count of some beautiful virtue, until at last I gave it up; you *would* only think the more of me, and think the less kindly of my dear home people, because, indeed, they didn't 'appreciate' me. How I hated the word. I'm not sure I was sorry to give up the effort to show you myself as I was. The fact is, your love made me all it believed me to be, and I thought the old things had passed away."

"Well, dear, and wasn't I right? Have we had a single cloud upon our married life?"

"Ah, dear man, little you know what the first two years of married life were to me. If you read your newspaper, I resented it; if you spent half-an-hour in your smoking den, or an hour with a friend, if you admired another woman, I resented each and all, kept sulky silence for days, even for weeks. And you, all the time, thought no evil, but were sorry for your poor 'little wife,' made much of her, and loved her all the more, the more sullen and resentful she became. She was 'out of sorts,' you said, and planned a little foreign tour, as you are now doing for Dorothy. I do believe you loved me out of it at last. The

time came when I felt myself hunted down by these sullen rages. I ran away, took immense walks, read voraciously, but could not help myself till our first child came; God's gift, our little Dorothy. Her baby fingers healed me as not even your love could do. But, oh, George, don't you see?"

"My poor Mary! Yes, I see; your healing was bought at the little child's expense, and the plague you felt within you was passed on to her. This, I see, is your idea; but I still believe it is a morbid fancy, and I still think my little trip will cure both mother and daughter."

"You say well, mother and daughter. The proverb should run, not a burnt child dreads the fire, but a burnt child will soonest catch fire! I feel that all my old misery will come back upon me if I am to see the same thing repeated in Dorothy." George sat musing for a minute or two, but my fear of him was gone; his face was full of tenderness for both of us.

"Do you know, Mary, I doubt if I'm right to treat this effort of yours with a high hand, and prescribe for evils I don't understand. Should you mind very much our calling our old friend, Dr. Evans, into council? I believe, after all, it will turn out to be an affair for him rather than for me."

This was worse than all. Were the miseries of this day to know no end? Should we, my Dorothy and her mother, end our days in a madhouse? I turned my eyes on my husband, and he understood.

"Nonsense, wife, not that! Now you really are absurd, and must allow me the relief of laughing at you. There, I feel better now, but I understand; a few years ago a doctor was never consulted about this kind of thing unless it was supposed to denote

insanity. But we have changed all that, and you're as mad as a hatter to get the notion. You've no idea how interesting it is to hear Evans talk of the mutual relations between thought and brain, and on the other hand, between thought and character. Homely an air as he has, he is up to all that's going on. You know he went through a course of study at Leipsic, where they know more than we about the brain and its behaviour, and then, he runs across every year to keep himself abreast with the times. It isn't every country town that is blessed with such a man."

I thought I was being let down gently to the everyday level, and answered as we answer remarks about the weather, until George said—

"Well, when shall we send for Evans? The sooner we get more light on this matter, the better for all of us."

"Very well, send for him to-morrow; tell him all I have told you, and, if you like, I shall be here to answer further questions."

#### PART IV

"Mrs. Elmore is quite right; this is no morbid fancy of hers. I have observed your pretty Miss Dorothy, and had my own speculations. Now, the whole thing lies in a nutshell."

"Can you deal with our trouble, doctor?" I cried out.

"Deal with it, my dear madam? Of course I can. Your Dorothy is a good girl, and will yield herself to treatment. As to that, you don't want me. The doctor is only useful on the principle that lookers on see most of the game. Once understand the thing, and it is with you the cure must lie."

“Please explain ; you will find me very obedient.”

“I’m not so sure of that ; you know the whole of my mental property has not been gathered in this right little, tight little island. You ladies look very meek ; but directly one begins to air one’s theories—which are not theories, by the way, but fixed principles of belief and conduct—you scent all manner of heterodoxy, and because a valuable line of scientific thought and discovery is new to you, you take up arms, with the notion that it flies in the face of the Bible. When, as a matter of fact, every new advance in science is a further revelation, growing out, naturally, from that we already have.”

“Try me, doctor ; your ’doxy shall be my ’doxy if you will only take us in hand, and I shall be ready enough to believe that your science is by revelation.”

“Well, here goes. In for a penny, in for a pound. In the first place, I want to do away with the sense of moral responsibility, both for yourself and Dorothy, which is wearing you out. Or, rather, I want to circumscribe its area and intensify its force. Dorothy has, perhaps, and conceivably her mother has also, inherited her peculiar temperament ; but you are not immediately responsible for that. She, again, has fostered this inherited trait, but neither is she immediately responsible for the fact.”

“How do you mean, doctor ? That we can’t help it, and must take our nature as we find it ? But that is worse than ever. No ; I cannot believe it. Certainly my husband has done a great deal to cure me.”

“No doubt he has. And how he has done it, without intention, I dare say, I hope by-and-by to show you. Perhaps you now and then remark, What creatures of habit we are !”



"And what of that? No one can help being struck now and then with the fact; especially, no mother."

"Well, and what does this force of habit amount to? and how do you account for it?"

"Why, I suppose it amounts to this, that you can do almost anything once you get into the way of it. Why, I don't know; I suppose it's the natural constitution of the mind."

"The 'natural constitution of the mind' is a conversational counter with whose value I am not acquainted. That you can get into the way of doing almost anything, is simple fact; but you must add, of thinking anything, of feeling anything, before you begin to limit the force of habit."

"I think I begin to see what you mean. We, my child and I, are not so much to blame now for our sullen and resentful feelings, because we have got the habit of them. But surely habits may be cured?"

"Ah, once we begin to see that, we are to blame for them. We must ask, How are we to set about the cure? What's to be *done*? What hopeless idiots we are, the best of us, not to see that the very existence of an evil is a demand for its cure, and that, in the moral world, there's a dock for every nettle!"

"And then, surely, the sins of the fathers visited upon the children, is a bitter law. How could Dorothy help what she inherited?"

"Dorothy could not help it, but you could; and what have you two excellent parents been about to defer until the child is budding into womanhood this cure which should have been achieved in her infancy? Surely, seventeen years ago at least, you must have seen indications of the failing which must needs be shown up now, to the poor girl's discredit."

I grew hot all over under this home thrust, while

George looked half dubious, half repentant, not being quite sure where his offence lay.

"It is doubly my fault, doctor, I see it all now. When Dorothy was a child I *would* not face the fact. It was too awful to think my child would be as I still was. So we had many little fictions that both nurse and mother saw through : the child was poorly, was teething still, was overdone. The same thing, only more so, went on during her schoolroom life. Dorothy was delicate, wanted stamina, must have a tonic. And this, though we had a governess who tried to convince me that it was temper and not delicacy that ailed my little girl. The worst of deceiving yourself is that you get to believe the lie. I saw much less of the schoolroom than of the nursery party, and firmly believed in Dorothy's frequent attacks of indisposition."

"But, supposing you had faced the truth, what would you have done?"

"There is my excuse ; I had no idea that anything could be done."

"Now, please, don't write me down a pagan if I try to show you what might have been done, and may yet be done."

"Doctor Evans!"

"Oh, yes, 'tis a fact ; you good women are convinced that the setting of a broken limb is a work for human skill, but that the cure of a fault of disposition is for Providence alone to effect, and you say your prayers and do nothing, looking down from great heights upon us who believe that skill and knowledge come in here too, and are meant to do so in the divine scheme of things. It's startling when you come to think of it, that every pair of parents have the absolute *making* of their child!"

"But what of *inherited* failings—such cases as this of ours?"

"Precisely a case in point. Don't you see, such a case is just a problem set before parents with a, 'See, how will you work out this so as to pass your family on free from taint?'"

"That's a noble thought of yours, Evans. It gives every parent a share in working out the salvation of the world, even to thousands of generations. Come, Mary, we're on our promotion! To pass on our children free from the blemishes they get from us is a thing worth living for."

"Indeed it is. But don't think me narrow-minded, doctor, nor that I should presume to think hard things of you men of science, if I confess that I still think the ills of the flesh fall within the province of man, but the evils of the spirit within the province of God."

"I'm not sure but that I'm of your mind; where we differ is as to the boundary line between flesh and spirit. Now, every fault of disposition and temper, though it may have begun in error of the spirit in ourselves or in some ancestor, by the time it becomes a fault of character is *a failing of the flesh*, and is to be dealt with as such—that is, by appropriate treatment. Observe, I am not speaking of occasional and sudden temptations and falls, or of as sudden impulses towards good, and the reaching of heights undreamed of before. These things are of the spiritual world, and are to be spiritually discerned. But the failing or the virtue which has become habitual to us is flesh of our flesh, and must be treated on that basis whether it is to be uprooted or fostered."

"I confess I don't follow: this line of argument should make the work of redemption gratuitous.

Every parent can save his child, and every man can save himself."

"No, my dear ; there you're wrong. I agree with Evans. 'Tis we who lose the efficacy of the great Redemption by failing to see what it *has* accomplished. That we have still to engage in a spiritual warfare, enabled by spiritual aids, Dr. Evans allows. His point is, as I understand it, why embarrass ourselves with these less material ills of the flesh which are open to treatment on the same lines, barring the drugs, as a broken limb or a disordered stomach. Don't you see how it works ? We fall, and fret, and repent, and fall again ; and are so over busy with our own internal affairs, that we have no time to get that knowledge of the Eternal which is the life of the living soul ?"

"All this is beyond me. I confess it is neither the creed nor the practice in which I was brought up. Meantime, how is it to affect Dorothy ? That is the practical question."

Dr. Evans threw a smiling "I told you so" glance at my husband, which was a little annoying ; however, he went on :—

"To be sure ; that is the point. Poor Dorothy is just now the occasional victim of a troop of sullen, resentful thoughts and feelings, which wear her out, shut out the sunshine, and are as a curtain between her and all she loves. Does she want these thoughts ? No ; she hates and deplors them on her knees, we need not doubt ; resolves against them ; goes through much spiritual conflict. She is a good girl, and we may be sure of all this. Now we must bring physical science to her aid. How those thoughts began we need not ask, but there they are ; they go patter, patter, to and fro, to and fro, in the nervous tissue

of the brain, until—here is the curious point of contact between the material and the immaterial, we see by results that there is such point of contact, but how or why it is so we have not even a guess to offer—until the nervous tissue is modified under the continued traffic in the same order of thoughts. Now, these thoughts become automatic; they come of themselves, and spread and flow as a river makes and enlarges its bed. Such habit of thought is set up, and must go on indefinitely, in spite of struggles, unless—and here is the word of hope—a contrary habit is set up, diverting the thoughts into some quite new channel. Keep the thoughts running briskly in the new channel, and, behold, the old connections are broken while a new growth of brain substance is perpetually taking place. The old thoughts return, and there is no place for them, and Dorothy has time to make herself think of other things before they can establish again the old links. There is, shortly, the philosophy of ordering our thoughts—the first duty of us all.”

“That is very wonderful, and should help us. Thank you very much; I had no idea that our *thoughts* were part and parcel, as it were, of any substance. But I am not sure yet how this is to apply to Dorothy. It seems to me that it will be very difficult for her, poor child, to bring all this to bear on herself. It will be like being put into trigonometry before you are out of subtraction.”

“You are right, Mrs. Elmore, it will be a difficult piece of work, to which she will have to give herself up for two or three months. If I am not mistaken in my estimate of her, by that time we shall have a cure. But if you had done the work in her childhood, a month would have effected it, and



the child herself would have been unconscious of effort."

"How sorry I am. Do tell me what I should have done."

"The tendency was there, we will allow; but you should never have allowed the *habit* of this sort of feeling to be set up. You should have been on the watch for the outward signs—the same then as now, some degree of pallor, with general limpness of attitude, and more or less dropping of the lips and eyes. The moment one such sign appeared, you should have been at hand to seize the child out of the cloud she was entering, and to let her bask for an hour or two in love and light, forcing her to meet you eye to eye, to find only love and joy in yours. Every sullen attack averted is so much against setting up the habit; and habit, as you know, is a chief factor in character."

"And can we do nothing for her now?"

"Certainly you can. Ignore the sullen humours, let gay life go on as if she was not there, only drawing her into it now and then by an appeal for her opinion, or for her laugh at a joke. Above all, when good manners compel her to look up, let her meet unclouded eyes, full of pleasure in her; for, believe, whatever cause of offence she gives to you, she is far more deeply offensive to herself. And you should do this all the more because, poor girl, the brunt of the battle will fall upon her."

"I see you are right; all along, her sullenness has given way before her father's delight in her, and indeed it is in this way that my husband has so far cured me. I suppose you would say he had broken the habit. But won't you see her and talk to her? I know you can help her most."

"Well, to tell you the truth, I was going to ask

you if I might ; her sensitive nature must be gently handled ; and, just because she has no such love for me as for her parents, I run less risk of wounding her. Besides, I have a secret to tell which should help her in the management of herself."

"Thank you, Evans ; we are more grateful than I can say. Will you strike while the iron's hot ? Shall we go away and send her to you, letting her suppose it is a mere medical call ?"

## PART V

"Good-morning, Miss Dorothy ; do you know I think it's quite time this state of things should come to an end. We are both tired of the humbug of treating you for want of health when you are quite strong and well."

Dorothy looked up with flushed face (I had it all later from both Dr. Evans and Dorothy herself), and eyes half relieved, half doubtful, but not resentful, and stood quietly waiting.

"All the same, I think you are in a bad way, and are in great need of help. Will you bear with me while I tell you what is the matter, and how you may be cured ?"

Dorothy was past speaking, and gave a silent assent.

"Don't be frightened, poor child, I don't speak to hurt you, but to help. A considerable part of a life which should be all innocent gaiety of heart, is spent in gloom and miserable isolation. Some one fails to dot his i's, and you resent it, not in words or manner, being too well brought up ; but the light within you is darkened by a flight of black thoughts. 'He (or she) shouldn't have done it ! It's too bad ! They

don't care how they hurt me! I should never have done so to her!'—and so on without end. Presently you find yourself swathed in a sort of invisible shroud; you cannot reach out a living hand to anybody, nor speak in living tones, nor meet your dear ones eye to eye with a living and loving glance. There you sit, like a dead man at the feast. By this time you have forgotten the first offence, and would give the world to get out of this death-in-life. You cry, you say your prayers, beg to be forgiven and restored, but your eyes are fixed upon yourself as a hateful person, and you are still wrapped in the cloud; until, suddenly (no doubt in answer to your prayers), a hug from little May, the first primrose of the year, a lark, filling the world with his gladness, and, presto! the key is turned, the enchanted princess liberated, glad as the lark, sweet as the flower, and gay as the bright child!"

No answer: Dorothy's arms laid on the table, and her face hidden upon them. At last, in a choked voice—"Please go on, doctor!"

"All this may be helped," a start: "may, within two or three months, be completely cured, become a horrid memory and nothing more!" A gasp, and streaming eyes raised, where the light of hope was struggling with fear and shame.

"This is very trying for you, dear child! But I must get on with my task, and when I have done, it's my belief you'll forget the pain for joy. In the first place, you are not a very wicked girl because these ugly thoughts master you; I don't say, mind you, that you will be without offence once you get the key between your fingers; but as it is, you need not sit in judgment on yourself any more."

Then Dr. Evans went on to make clear to Dorothy what he had already made clear to us of the interaction

of thought and brain ; how that Thought, Brain, & Co., were such close allies that nobody could tell which of the two did what : that they even ran a business of their own, independently of *Ego*, who was supposed to be the active head of the firm, and so on.

Dorothy listened with absorbed intentness, as if every word were saving ; but the light of hope died slowly out.

"I think I see what you mean ; these black thoughts come and rampage even against the desire of the *Ego*, I, myself : but, oh doctor, don't you see, that's all the worse for me ?"

"Stop a bit, stop a bit, my dear young lady, I have not done yet. *Ego* sees things are going wrong and asserts himself ; sets up new thoughts in a new course, and stops the old traffic, and in course of time, and a very short time too, the old nerve connections are broken, and the old way under tillage ; no more opening for traffic there. Have you got it ?"

"I think so. I'm to think of something else, and soon there will be no room in the brain for the ugly thoughts which distress me. But that's just the thing I can't do !"

"But that is exactly the only thing you have power to do ! Have you any idea what the will is, and what are its functions ?"

"I don't know much about it. I suppose your will should make you able to do the right thing when you feel you can't ! You should say, I will, and go and do it. But you don't know how weak I am. It makes no difference to me to say, I will !"

"Well, now, to own up honestly, I don't think it ever made much difference to anybody outside of the story-books. All the same, Will is a mighty fellow in

his own way, but he goes with a sling and a stone, and not with the sword of Goliath. He attacks the giant with what seems a child's plaything, and the giant is slain. This is how it works. When ill thoughts *begin* to molest you, turn away your mind with a vigorous turn, and *think of something else*. I don't mean think good forgiving thoughts, perhaps you are not ready for that yet; but think of something interesting and pleasant; the new dress you must plan, the friend you like best, the book you are reading; best of all, fill heart and mind suddenly with some capital plan for giving pleasure to some poor body whose days are dull. The more exciting the thing you think of, the safer you are. Never mind about fighting the evil thought. This is the one thing you have to do; for this is, perhaps, the sole power the will has. It enables you to change your thoughts; to turn yourself round from gloomy thoughts to cheerful ones. Then you will find that your prayers will be answered, for you will know what to ask for, and will not turn your back on the answer when it comes. There, child, I have told you the best secret of an old man's life, and have put into your hands the key of self-government and a happy life. Now you know how to be better than he that taketh a city."

"Thank you a thousand times for your precious secret. You have lifted my feet out of the slough. I *will* change my thoughts (may I say that?). You shall find that your key does not rust for want of use. I trust I may be helped from above never to enter that cloud again."

And she did not. It is five years since she had that talk in the library with Dr. Evans (he died within the year, to our exceeding regret). What battles she



fought we never heard ; never again was the subject alluded to. For two years she was our constantly loving and joyous home daughter ; for three, she has been Arthur Brisbane's happy-hearted wife ; and her little sunbeam of an Elsie—no fear that she will ever enter the cloud in which mother and grandmother were so nearly lost.

## CHAPTER V

### CONSEQUENCES

HAVE you ever played at "Consequences," dear reader? This is how it goes. He said to her, "It's a cold day." She said to him, "I like chocolates." The consequence was, they were both put to death, and the world said, "It serves them right."

Just so exquisitely inconsequent is the game of "consequences" in real life—at which many a child is an unwilling player, and just so arbitrary their distribution. We are all born heirs to all the Russias if a certain aptness at autocratic government can be construed into a title. Watch the children in the street play at keeping school; how the schoolmistress lavishes "handers," how she corners and canes her scholars! And the make-believe scholars enter into the game. They would do the same if they had the chance, and their turn will come.

How does it work in real life, this turn for autocracy, which, you may observe, gives zest to most of the children's games?

Little Nancy is inclined to be fretful; her nurse happens to be particularly busy that morning looking out the children's summer clothing. She is a kind-hearted woman, and fond of Nancy, but, "Why does the child whine so?" And a hasty box on the little ear emphasises the indignant query. There is mischief already, which is the cause of the whining; and, by

that concussion, Nancy is "put to death," like the people in the game; not for a year or two, though, and nobody associates nurse with the family sorrow; and she, for her part, never thinks again of that hasty blow. But, you object, nurse is ignorant, though kind; with the child's parents, it is otherwise. Yes, but not entirely otherwise. Mr. Lindsay, who is a book-lover, goes into his den to find his little boy of four, making "card-houses," with some choice new volumes he has clambered after; down they go bump, and the corners are turned, and the books unsightly objects evermore. "What are you doing here, child? Go to the nursery, and don't let me see you here again!" Ah, me! Does he know how deep it cuts? Does he know that the ten minutes romp with "father" in his room is the supreme joy of the day for little Dick? And does he know that everything is for ever and ever to a little child, whose experience has not yet taught him the trick of hoping when things look dark? But, "It is for the child's good;" is it? Dick does not yet know what is wrong. "Never touch books which are not given you to play with," would have instructed him, and hindered similar mischief in the future.

How is it that devoted nurse and affectionate father cause injurious "concussions," moral and physical, to a child's tender nature? A good deal is to be set down to ignorance or thoughtlessness; they do not know, or they do not consider, how this and that must affect a child. But the curious thing is that grown-up people nearly always err on the same lines. The arbitrary exercise of authority on the part of parent, nurse, governess, whoever is set in authority over him, is the real stone of stumbling and rock of offence in the way of many a child. Nor is there room for the tender indulgent mother to congratulate herself and say,

“I always thought Mrs. Naybor was too hard on her children,” for the most ruinous exercise of arbitrary authority is when the mother makes herself a law unto her child, with power to excuse him from his duties, and to grant him (more than papal) indulgences. This sort of tender parent is most tenacious of her authority, no one is permitted to interfere with her rule—for rule it is, though her children are notably unruly. She answers all suggestions and expostulation with one formula: My children shall never have it to say that their mother refused them anything it was in her power to give.

“In her power.” This mother errs in believing that her children are hers—in her power, body and soul. Can she not do what she likes with her own?

It is worth while to look to the springs of conduct in human nature for the source of this common cause of the mismanagement of children. There must be some unsuspected reason for the fact that persons of weak and of strong nature should err in the same direction.

In every human being there are implanted, as we know, certain so-called primary or natural desires, which are among the springs or principles out of which his action or conduct flows. These desires are neither virtuous nor vicious in themselves: they are quite involuntary: they have place equally in the savage and savant: he who makes his appeal to any one of those primary desires is certain of a hearing. Thus, every man has an innate desire of companionship: every man wants to *know*, however little worthy the objects of his curiosity: we all want to stand well with our neighbours, however fatuously we lay ourselves out for esteem: we would, each of us, fain be the best at some one thing, if it be only a game of chance which excites our emulation; and we would all have rule, have

authority, even if our ambition has no greater scope than the rule of a dog or a child affords. These desires being primary or natural, the absence of any one of them in a human being makes that person so far unnatural. The man who hates society is a misanthrope ; he who has no curiosity is a clod. But, seeing that a man may make shipwreck of his character and his destiny by the excessive indulgence of any one of these desires, the regulation, balancing, and due ordering of these springs of action is an important part of that wise self-government which is the duty of every man, especially of every Christian man.

It is not that the primary desires are the only springs of action ; we all know that the affections, the appetites, the emotions, play their part, and that reason and conscience are the appointed regulators of machinery which may be set in motion by a hundred impulses. But the subject for our consideration is the punishments inflicted on children ; and we shall not arrive at any safe conclusion unless we regard these punishments from the point of view of the punisher as well as from that of the punished.

Now every one of the primary desires, as well as of the affections and appetites, has a tendency to run riot if its object be well within its grasp. The desire of society undirected and unregulated may lead to endless gadding about and herding together. The fine principle of curiosity may issue in an inordinate love of gossip, and of poor disconnected morsels of knowledge served up in scraps, which are of the nature of gossip. Ambition, the desire of power, comes into play when we have a live thing to order, and we rule child and servant, horse and dog. And it is well that we should. The person who is (comparatively) without ambition has no capacity to rule.



Have you a nurse who “manages” children well? She is an ambitious woman, and her ambition finds delightful scope in the government of the nursery. At the same time, the love of power, unless it be duly and carefully regulated and controlled, leads to arbitrary behaviour—that is, to lawless, injurious behaviour—towards those under our rule. Nay, we may be so carried away, intoxicated, by a fierce lust of power that we do some terrible irrevocable deed of cruelty to a tender child-body or soul, and wake up to never-ending remorse. We meant no harm; we meant to teach obedience, and, good God! we have killed a child.

Within the last few years tales have been told in the newspapers of the savage abuse of power, free for the time being from external control; tales, which, be they true or not, should make us all commune with our hearts and be still. For, we may believe it, they who have done these things are no worse than we could be. They had opportunity to do ill deeds, and they did them. We have not been so far left to ourselves. But let us look ourselves in the face; let us recognise that the principle which has betrayed others into the madness of crime is inherent in us also, and that whether it shall lead us to heights of noble living or to criminal cruelty is not a matter to be left to the chapter of accidents. We have need of the divine grace to prevent and follow us, and we have need to consciously seek and diligently use this grace to keep us who are in authority in the spirit of meekness, remembering always that the One who is entrusted with the rod of iron is meek and lowly of heart.

In proportion as we keep ourselves fully alive to our tendency in this matter of authority may we trust ourselves to administer the law to creatures so tender

in body and soul as are the little children. We shall remember that a word may wound, that a look may strike as a blow. It may indeed be necessary to wound in order to heal, but we shall examine ourselves well before we use the knife. There will be no hasty dealing out of reproof and punishment, reward and praise, according to the manner of mood we are in. We shall not only be aware that our own authority is deputed, and to be used with the meekness of wisdom; but we shall be infinitely careful in our choice of the persons in whose charge we place our children. It is not enough that they be good Christian people. We all know good Christian persons of an arbitrary turn who venture to wield that rod of iron which is safe in the hands of One alone. Let them be good Christian persons of culture and self-knowledge, not the morbid self-knowledge that comes of introspection, but that far wider, humbler cognisance of self that comes of a study of the guiding principles and springs of action common to us all as human beings, and which brings with it the certainty that—"I am just such an one as the rest, might even be as the worst, were it not for the grace of God and careful walking."

It is no doubt much easier to lay down our authority and let the children follow their own lead, or be kept in order by another, than to exercise constant watchfulness in the exercise of our calling. But this is not in our option; we must *rule* with diligence. It is necessary for the children that we should; but we must keep ourselves continually in check, and see that our innate love of power finds lawful outlet in the building up of a child's character, and not in the rude rebuff, the jibe and sneer, the short answer and hasty slap which none of us older

people could conceivably endure ourselves, and yet practise freely on the children "for their good."

"To this day," says an American author,\* "the old tingling pain burns my cheeks as I recall certain rude and contemptuous words which were said to me when I was very young, and stamped on my memory for ever. I was once called 'a stupid child' in the presence of strangers. I had brought the wrong book from my father's study. Nothing could be said to me to-day which would give me a tenth part of the hopeless sense of degradation which came from those words. Another time, on the arrival of an unexpected guest to dinner, I was sent, in a great hurry, away from the table to make room, with the remark that 'it was not of the least consequence about the child; she could just as well have her dinner afterward.' 'The child' would have been only too happy to help in the hospitality of the sudden emergency if the thing had been differently put; but the sting of having it put that way I never forgot. Yet, in both these instances, the rudeness was so small in comparison with what we habitually see that it would be too trivial to mention, except for the bearing of the fact that the pain it gave has lasted until now."

"What, is it severity in these maudlin days to call a child 'stupid'? A pretty idiot he'll make of himself when the world comes to bandy names with him if he's to be brought up on nothing but the butter and honey of soft speeches." This is a discordant protest, not at all in harmony with the notions of perfect child-living with which we are amusing ourselves in these days; but we cannot afford to turn a deaf ear to it. "Don't make a fool of the

\* "Bits of Talk about Home Matters," by Helen Hunt Jackson.

child," was the warning young mothers used to get from their elders. But we have changed all that, and a child's paradise must be prepared for the little feet to walk in. "He's so happy at school," we are told, and we ask no more. We have reversed the old order ; it used to be, "If he's good, he will be happy ;" now we say, "If he's happy, he will be good." Goodness and happiness are regarded as convertible terms, only we like best to put "happy" as the cause, and "good" as the consequent. And the child brought up on these lines is both happy and good without much moral effort of self-compelling on his own part, while our care is to surround him with happy-making circumstances until he has got into the trick, as it were, of being good.

But there's something rotten in the state of Denmark. Once upon a time there was a young mother who conceived that every mother might be the means of gracing her offspring with fine teeth : "For," said she, "it stands to reason that for every year of wear and grind you save the child's teeth, the man will have a fine set a year the longer." "Nonsense, my dear madam," said the doctor, "you are ruining the child's teeth with all this pappy food ; they'll be no stronger than egg-shells. Give him plenty of hard crusts to crunch, a bone to gnaw ; he must have something to harden his teeth upon." Just so of the moral "teeth" by means of which the child must carve out a place for himself in this full world. He must endure hardness if you would make a man of him. Blame as well as praise, tears as well as smiles, are of human nature's daily food ; pungent speech is a 'tool of the tongue' not to be altogether eschewed in the building of character ; let us call a spade a spade, and the child who brings the wrong

book "stupid," whether before strangers or behind them. Much better this than a chamber-conference with "Mother" about every trifle, which latter is apt to lead to a habit of morbid self-introspection.

We are, in truth, between Scylla and Charybdis: on this side, the six-headed, many-toothed monster of our own unbridled love of power; on that, the whirlpool of emasculating softness which would engulf the manly virtues of our poor little Ulysses. If you must choose, let it be Scylla rather than Charybdis, counsels our Circe; better lose something through the monster with the teeth, than lose yourself in the whirlpool. But is there not a better way?

Weigh his estate and thine; accustom'd, he,  
 To all sweet courtly usage that obtains  
 Where dwells the King. How, with thy utmost pains,  
 Canst thou produce what shall full worthy be?  
 One, "greatest in the kingdom," is with thee,  
 Whose spirit yet beholds the Father's face,  
 And, thence replenish'd, glows with constant grace;  
 Take fearful heed lest he despis'd be!  
 Order thy goings softly, as before  
 A Prince; nor let thee out unmannerly  
 In thy rude moods and irritable: more,  
 Beware lest round him wind of words rave free.  
 Refrain thee; see thy speech be sweet and rare:  
 Thy ways, consider'd; and thine aspect, fair.



## CHAPTER VI

### *MRS. SEDLEY'S TALE*

It is very strange how a moral weakness in her child gives a mother the same sense of yearning pity that she has for a bad bodily infirmity. I wonder if that is how God feels for us when we go on year by year doing the thing we hate? I think a mother gets to understand many things about the dealings of God that are not plain to others. For instance, how it helps me to say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," when I think of my poor little Fanny's ugly fault. Though there is some return of it nearly every day, what could I do but forgive?

But forgiveness that does not heal is like the wretched ointments with which poor people dress their wounds. In one thing I know I have not done well; I have hardly said a word to John about the poor little girlie's failing, though it has troubled me constantly for nearly a year. But I think he suspects there is something wrong; we never talk quite freely about our shy pretty Fanny. Perhaps that is one reason for it. She is such a nervous timid little being, and looks so bewitching when the long lashes droop, the tender mouth quivers, and the colour comes and goes in the soft cheek, that we are shy of exposing, even to each other, the faults we see in our graceful fragile little girl. Perhaps neither of us quite trusts the other to deal with Fanny, and to use the knife sparingly.

But this state of things must not go on: it is a miserable thing to write down, but I cannot believe a word the child says! And the evil is increasing. Only now and then used Fanny to be detected in what we called a fib, but now the terrible doubt lest that little mouth may be at any moment uttering lies takes the delight out of life, and accounts for the pale looks which give my kind husband so much concern.

For example, only within the last day or two I have noticed the following and other such examples:—

“Fanny, did you remember to give my message to cook?”

“Yes, mother.”

“And what did she say?”

“That she wouldn’t be able to make any jam to-day because the fruit had not come.”

I went into the kitchen shortly after, and found cook stirring the contents of a brass pan, and, sad to say, I asked no questions. It was one of Fanny’s circumstantial statements of the kind I have had most reason to doubt. Did she lie because she was afraid to own that she had forgotten? Hardly so: knowing the child’s sensitive nature, we have always been careful not to visit her small misdemeanours with any punishment whenever she “owned up.” And then, cowardice would hardly cause her to invent so reasonable an answer for cook. Again:

“Did you meet Mrs. Fleming’s children?”

“Oh, yes, mother! and Berty was so rude! He pushed Dotty off the curb-stone!”

Nurse, who was sitting by the fire with baby, raised her eyebrows in surprise, and I saw the whole thing was an invention. Another more extraordinary instance:

“Mother, when we were in the park we met Miss

Butler, just by the fountain, you know; and she kissed me, and asked me how my mother is"—said *apropos* of nothing, in the most quiet, easy way.

I met Miss Butler this morning, and thanked her for the kind inquiries she had been making through my little girl; and—"Do you think Fanny grown?"

Miss Butler looked perplexed; Fanny was a great favourite of hers, perhaps because of the loveliness of which her parents could not pretend to be unaware.

"It is more than a month since I have seen the little maid, but I shall look in soon, and gladden her mother's heart with all the praises my sweet Fan deserves!"

Little she knew that shame, and not pride, dyed my cheek; but I could not disclose my Fanny's sad secret to even so near a friend.

But to talk it out with John is a different matter. He ought to know. And, certainly, men have more power than women to see into the reasons and the bearings of things. There had I been thinking for months in a desultory kind of way as to the why and wherefore of this ingrained want of truthfulness in the child, and yet I was no nearer the solution.

A new departure in the way of lying made me at last break the ice with John; indeed, this was the only subject about which we had ever had reserves.

"Mother, Hugh was so naughty at lessons this morning! He went close up to Miss Clare while she was writing, nudged her elbow on purpose, and made her spill the ink all over the table-cloth."

I chanced to meet Miss Clare in the hall, and remarked that I heard she had found Hugh troublesome this morning.

"Troublesome? Not at all; he was quite industrious and obedient."

I said nothing about the ink, but went straight to the schoolroom to find the table neat as Miss Clare always leaves it, and no sign of even a fresh ink-spot. What possessed the child? This inveterate and inventive untruthfulness was like a form of madness. I sat in dismay for an hour or more, not thinking, but stunned by this new idea—that the child was not responsible for her words; and yet, could it be so? None of our children were so merry at play, so intelligent at lessons. Well, I would talk it over with John without the loss of another day.

“John, I am miserable about Fanny. Do you know the child tells fibs constantly?”

“Call them lies; an ugly thing deserves an ugly name. What sort of lies? What tempts her to lie?”

John did not seem surprised. Perhaps he knew more of this misery than I supposed.

“That’s the thing! Her fi—lies are so uncalled-for, so unreasonable, that I do not know how to trust her.”

“Unreasonable? You mean her tales don’t hang together; that’s a common case with liars. You know the saying—‘Liars should have good memories’?”

“Don’t call the poor child a liar, John; I believe she is more to be pitied than blamed. What I mean is, you can’t find rhyme or reason for the lies she tells.” And I gave my husband a few instances like those I have written above.

“Very extraordinary! There’s a hint of malice in the Hugh and the ink-bottle tale, and a hint of cowardice in that about the jam; but for the rest, they are inventions pure and simple, with neither rhyme nor reason, as you say.”

“I don’t believe a bit in the malice. I was going to correct her for telling an unkind tale about Hugh, but

you know how she hangs on her brother, and she told her tale with the most innocent face. I am convinced there was no thought of harming him."

"Are you equally sure that she never says what is false to cover a fault ; in fact, out of cowardice ?"

"No ; I think I have found her out more than once in ingenious subterfuges. You know what a painfully nervous child she is. For instance, I found the other day a blue cup off that cabinet, with handle gone, hidden behind the woodwork. Fanny happened to come in at the moment, and I asked her if she knew who had broken it.

"'No, mother, I don't know, but I think it was Mary, when she was dusting the cabinet ; indeed, I'm nearly sure I heard a crash.'

"But the child could not meet my eye, and there was a sort of blenching as of fear about her."

"But, as a rule, you do not notice these symptoms ?"

"As a rule, poor Fanny's tarradiddles come out in the most quiet, easy way, with all the boldness of innocence ; and even when she is found out, and the lie brought home to her, she looks bewildered rather than convicted."

"My dear, I wish you would banish the whole tribe of foolish and harmful expressions whose tendency is to make light of sin. Call a spade a spade. A 'tarradiddle' is a thing to make merry over ; a fib you smile and wink at ; but a *lie*—why, the soul is very far gone from original righteousness that can endure the name, even while guilty of the thing."

"That's just it ; I cannot endure to apply so black a name to the failings of our child ; for, do you know, I begin to suspect that poor little Fanny does it un-awares—does not know in the least that she has departed from the fact. I have had a horrible dread



upon me from time to time that her defect is a mental, and not a moral one. That she has not the clear perception of true and false with which the most of us are blessed."

"Whe—ew!" from John; but his surprise was feigned. I could see now that he had known what was going on all the time, and had said nothing, because he had nothing to say; in his heart he agreed with me about our lovely child. The defect arose from a clouded intelligence, which showed itself in this way only, now; but how dare we look forward? Now I saw why poor John was so anxious to have the offence called by the blackest moral name. He wished to save us from the suspicion of an evil—worse because less open to cure. We looked blankly at each other, John trying to carry it all off with a light air, but his attempt was a conspicuous failure.

I forgot to say that my sister Emma was staying with us, the 'clever woman of the family,' who was "going in" for all sorts of things, to come out, we believed, at the top of her profession as a lady doctor. She had taken no part in the talk about Fanny—rather tiresome of her, as I wanted to know what she thought; but now, while we were vainly trying to hide from each other our dismay, she broke out into a long low laugh, which, to say the least of it, seemed a little unfeeling.

"Oh, you absurd parents! You are too good and earnest, and altogether too droll! Why in the world, instead of sitting there with blank eyes—conjuring up bogeys to frighten each other—why don't you look the thing in the face, and find out by the light of modern thought what really ails Fan? Poor pet! 'Save me from my parents!' is a rendering which might be forgiven her."

“Then you don't think there's any mental trouble?” we cried in a breath, feeling already as if a burden were lifted, and we could straighten our backs and walk abroad.

“‘Mental trouble?’ What nonsense! But there, I believe all you parents are alike. Each pair thinks their own experiences entirely new; their own children the first of the kind born into the world. Now, a mind that had had any scientific training would see at once that poor Fanny's lies—if I must use John's terrible bad word—inventions, I should have called them, are symptomatic, as you rightly guessed, Annie, of certain brain conditions; but of brain disease—oh, no! Why, foolish people, don't you see you are entertaining an angel unawares? This vice of ‘lying’ you are mourning over is the very quality that goes to the making of poets!”

“Poets and angels are well in their places,” said John, rather crossly, “but my child must speak the truth. What she states for a fact, I must know to be a fact, according to the poor common-sense view of benighted parents.”

“And there is your work as parents. Teach her truth, as you would teach her French or sums—a little to-day, a little more to-morrow, and every day a lesson. Only as you teach her the nature of truth will the gift she has be effectual. But I really should like to know what is your notion about truth—are we born with it, or educated up to it?”

“I am not sure that we care to be experimented upon, and held up to the world as blundering parents,” said I; “perhaps we had better keep our crude notions to ourselves.” I spoke rather tartly, I know, for I was more vexed for John than for myself. That

he should be held up to ridicule in his own house—by a sister of mine, too!

“Now I have vexed you both. How horrid I am! And all the time, as I watch you with the children, I don’t feel good enough to tie your shoes. Don’t I say to myself twenty times a day, ‘After all, the insight and love parents get from above is worth a thousandfold more than science has to teach’?”

“Nay, Emma, ’tis we who have to apologise for being jealous of science—that’s the fact—and quick to take offence. Make it up, there’s a good girl! and let Annie and me have the benefit of your advice about our little girl, for truly we are in a fog.”

“Well, I think you were both right in considering that her failing had two sources: moral cowardice the first; she does something wrong, or wrong in her eyes, and does not tell—why?”

“Aye, there’s the difficulty; why is she afraid to tell the truth? I may say that we have never punished her, or ever looked coldly on her for any fault but this of prevarication. The child is so timid that we feared severe measures might make the truth the more difficult.”

“There I think you are right. And we have our fingers on one of the weak places: Fanny tells lies out of sheer fear—moral weakness; causeless it may be, but there it is. And I’m not so sure that it is causeless; she is always in favour for good behaviour, gentleness, obedience, and that kind of thing; indeed, this want of veracity seems to me her one fault. Now, don’t you think the fear of having her parents look coldly on her and think less well of her may be, to such a timid, clinging child, a great temptation to hide a fault?”

“Very likely; but one does not see how to act.

Would you pass over her faults altogether without inquiry or notice?"

"I'm afraid you must use the knife there boldly, for that is the tenderest way in the end. Show little Fan the depth of your love—that there is *no* fault you cannot forgive in her, but that the one fault which hurts you most is, not to hear the exact truth."

"I see. Suppose she has broken a valuable vase and hides the fact, I am to unearth her secret—not, as I am very much inclined to do, let it lie buried for fear of involving her in worse falsehood, but show her the vase and tax her with hiding it."

"And her immediate impulse will be to say, 'I didn't.' No; make sure of your ground, then show her the pieces; say the vase was precious, but you do not mind about that; the thing that hurts you is that she could not trust her mother. I can imagine one of the lovely scenes you mothers have with your children too good for outsiders to look in upon."

The tears came into my eyes, for I could imagine the scene too. I could see the way to draw my child closer and closer by *always* forgiving, always comprehending and loving her, and always protesting against the falsehood which *would* rise between us. I was lost in a delicious reverie—how I might sometime come to show her that her mother's ever-ready forgiveness was but a faint picture of what some one calls the "all-forgiving gentleness of God," when I heard John break in:—

"Yes, I can see that if we both make a point of free and tender forgiveness of every fault, on condition that she owns up, we may in time cure her of lying out of sheer fear. But I don't see that she gets the principle of truth any more. The purely inventive lies go on as before, and the child is not to be trusted."

“‘Purely inventive,’ there you have it. Don’t you see? The child is full of imagination, and figures to herself endless scenes, evolved like the German student’s camel. The thousand and one things which *might* happen are so real to her that the child is, as you said, bewildered; hardly able to distinguish the one which has happened. Now, it’s perfect nonsense to lament over this as a moral failing—it is a want of mental balance; not that any quality is deficient, but that her conceptive power runs away with her perceptive; she sees the many things that might be more readily than the thing that is. Doesn’t she delight in fairy tales?”

“Well, to tell the truth, we have thought them likely to foster her failing, and have kept her a good deal on a diet of facts.”

“I shouldn’t wonder if you are wrong there. An imperious imagination like Fanny’s demands its proper nourishment. Let her have her daily meal: ‘The Babes in the Wood,’ ‘The Little Match-Girl,’ ‘The Snow-Maiden,’ tales and legends half-historic, above all, the lovely stories of the Bible; whatever she can figure to herself and live over and over; but *not* twaddling tales of the daily doings of children like herself, whether funny or serious. The child wants an opening into the larger world where all things are possible and where beautiful things are always happening. Give her in some form this necessary food, and her mind will be so full of delicious imaginings, that she will be under no temptation to invent about the commonplaces of every-day life.”

My husband laughed: “My dear Emma, you must let us do our best with the disease; the cure is too wild! ‘Behold, this dreamer cometh!’—think of sending the child through life with this label.”



"Your quotation is unfortunate, and you have not heard me out. I do believe that to starve her imagination would be to do real wrong to the child. But, at the same time, you must diligently cultivate the knowledge and the love of the truth. Now, the truth is no more than the fact as it is; and 'tis my belief that Fanny's falsehoods come entirely from want of perception of the fact through pre-occupation of mind."

"Well, what must we do?"

"Why, give her daily, or half-a-dozen times a day, lessons in truth. Send her to the window: 'Look out, Fanny, and tell me what you see.' She comes back, having seen a cow where there is a horse. She looks again and brings a true report, and you teach her that it is not true to say the thing which is not. You send a long message to the cook, requiring the latter to write it down as she receives it and send you up the slate; if it is all right, the kiss Fanny gets is for speaking the truth: gradually, she comes to reverence truth, and distinguishes between the facts of life where truth is all in all, and the wide realms of make-believe, where fancy may have free play."

"I do believe you are right, Emma; most of Fanny's falsehoods seem to be told in such pure innocence, I should not wonder if they do come out of the kingdom of make-believe. At any rate, we'll try Emma's specific—shall we, John?"

"Indeed, yes; and carefully, too. It seems to me to be reasonable, the more so, as we don't find any trace of malice in Fanny's misleading statements."

"Oh, if there were, the treatment would be less simple; first, you should deal with the malice, and then *teach* the love of truth in daily lessons. That is the mistake so many people make. They think their

children are capable of loving and understanding *truth* by nature, which they are not. The best parents have to be on the watch to hinder all opportunities of misstatement."

"And now, that you may see how much we owe you, let me tell you of the painful example always before our eyes, which has done more than anything to make me dread Fanny's failing. It is an open secret, I fear, but do not let it go further out of this house. You know Mrs. Casterton, our friend's wife? It is a miserable thing to say, but you cannot trust a word she utters. She tells you, Miss So-and-So has a bad kind of scarlet fever, and even while she is speaking you know it is false; husband, children, servants, neighbours, none can be blind to the distressing fact, and she has acquired the sort of simpering manner a woman gets when she loses respect and self-respect. What if Fanny had grown up like her?"

"Poor woman! and this shame might have been spared her, had her parents been alive to their duty."

## CHAPTER VII

### ABILITY

“BE *sure* you call at Mrs. Milner’s, Fred, for the address of her laundress.”

“All right, mother!” And Fred was half-way down the path before his mother had time to add a second injunction. A second? Nay, a seventh, for this was already the sixth time of asking; and Mrs. Bruce’s half-troubled expression showed she placed little faith in her son’s “All right.”

“I don’t know what to do with Fred, doctor; I am not in the least sure he will do my message. Indeed, to speak honestly, I am sure he will not. This is a trifling matter; but when the same thing happens twenty times a day—when his rule is to forget everything he is desired to remember—it makes us anxious about the boy’s future.”

Dr. Maclehose drummed meditatively on the table, and put his lips into form for a whistle. This remark of Mrs. Bruce’s was “nuts” to him. He had assisted, professionally, at the appearance of the nine young Bruces, and the family had no more esteemed friend and general confidant. For his part, he liked the Bruces. Who could help it? The parents intelligent and genial, the young folk well looking, well grown, and open-hearted, they were just the family to make friends. All the same, the doctor found in the Bruces occasion to mount his pet hobby:—“My Utopia is the

land where the family doctor has leave to play schoolmaster to the parents. To think of a fine brood like the young Bruces running to waste in half-a-dozen different ways through the invincible ignorance of father and mother! Nice people, too!"

For seventeen years Dr. Maclehose had been deep in the family counsels, yet never till now had he seen the way to put in his oar anent any question of bringing up the children. Wherefore he drummed on the table, and pondered:—"Fair and softly, my good fellow; fair and softly! Make a mess of it now, and it's my last chance; hit the nail on the head, and, who knows?"

"Does the same sort of thing go on about his school work?"

"Precisely; he is always in arrears. He has forgotten to take a book, or to write an exercise, or learn a lesson; in fact, his school life is a record of forgets and penalties."

"Worse than that Dean of Canterbury, whose wife *would* make him keep account of his expenditure; and thus stood the entries for one week:—'Gloves, 5s.; Forgets, £4, 15s.' His writing was none too legible, so his wife, looking over his shoulder, cried, 'Faggots! Faggots! What in the world! Have you been buying wood?' 'No, my dear; those are *forgets*;'—his wife gave it up."

"A capital story; but what is amusing in a Dean won't help a boy to get through the world, and we are both uneasy about Fred."

"He is one of the 'Boys' Eleven,' isn't he?"

"Oh, yes, and is wild about it: and there, I grant you, he never forgets. It's, 'Mother, get cook to give us an early dinner: we must be on the field by two!' 'Don't forget to have my flannels clean for Friday,

will you mumsy?' he knows when to coax. 'Subscription is due on Thursday, mother!' and this, every day till he gets the money."

"I congratulate you, my dear friend, there's nothing seriously amiss with the boy's brain."

"Good heavens, doctor! Whoever thought there was? You take my breath away!"

"Well, well, I didn't mean to frighten you, but, don't you see, it comes to this: either it's a case of chronic disease, open only to medical treatment, if to any; or it is just a case of defective education, a piece of mischief bred of allowance which his parents cannot too soon set themselves to cure."

Mrs. Bruce was the least in the world nettled at this serious view of the case. It was one thing for her to write down hard things of her eldest boy, the pride of her heart, but a different matter for another to take her *au sérieux*.

"But, my dear doctor, are you not taking a common fault of youth too seriously? It's tiresome that he should forget so, but give him a year or two, and he will grow out of it, you'll see. Time will steady him. It's just the volatility of youth, and for my part I don't like to see a boy with a man's head on his shoulders." The doctor resumed his drumming on the table. He had put his foot in it already, and confounded his own foolhardiness.

"Well, I daresay you are right in allowing something on the score of youthful volatility; but we old doctors, whose business it is to study the close connection between mind and matter, see our way to only one conclusion, that any failing of mind or body, left to itself, can do no other than strengthen."

"Have another cup of tea, doctor? I am not sure that I understand. I know nothing about science.



You mean that Fred will become more forgetful and less dependable the older he gets?"

"I don't know that I should have ventured to put it so baldly, but that's about the fact. But, of course, circumstances may give him a bent in the other direction, and Fred may develop into such a careful old sobersides that his mother will be ashamed of him."

"Don't laugh at me, doctor; you make the whole thing too serious for a laughing matter." To which there was no answer, and there was silence in the room for the space of fully three minutes, while the two pondered.

"You say," in an imperious tone, "that 'a fault left to itself must strengthen.' What are we to do? His father and I wish, at any rate, to do our duty." Her ruffled maternal plumage notwithstanding, Mrs. Bruce was in earnest, all her wits on the alert. "Come, I've scored one!" thought the doctor; and then, with respectful gravity, which should soothe any woman's *amour propre*,

"You ask a question not quite easy to answer. But allow me, first, to try and make the principle plain to you: that done, the question of what to do settles itself. Fred never forgets his cricket or other pleasure engagements? No? And why not? Because his interest is excited; therefore his whole attention is fixed on the fact to be remembered. Now, as a matter of fact, what you have regarded with full attention, it is next to impossible to forget. First get Fred to fix his attention on the matter in hand, and you may be sure he won't forget it."

"That may be very true; but how can I make a message to Mrs. Milner as interesting to him as the affairs of his club?"

“Ah! There you have me. Had you begun with Fred at a year old the thing would have settled itself. The *habit* would have been formed.”

To the rescue, Mrs. Bruce's woman's wit:—“I see; he must have the *habit* of paying attention, so that he will naturally take heed to what he is told, whether he cares about the matter or not.”

“My dear madam, you've hit it; all except the word ‘naturally.’ At present Fred is in a delightful state of nature in this and a few other respects. But the educational use of *habit* is to correct nature. If parents would only see this fact, the world would become a huge reformatory, and the next generation, or, at any rate, the third, would dwell in the kingdom of heaven as a regular thing, and not by fits and starts, and here and there, which is the best that happens to us.”

“I'm not sure I see what you mean; but,” said this persistent woman, “to return to this habit of attention which is to reform my Fred—do try and tell me what to do. You gentlemen are so fond of going off into general principles, while we poor women can grasp no more than a practical hint or two to go on with. My boy would be cut up to know how little his fast friend, the doctor, thinks of him!”

“‘Poor women,’ truly! and already you have thrown me with two staggering buffets. My theories have no practical outcome, and, I think little of Fred, who has been my choice chum ever since he left off draperies! It remains for the vanquished to ‘behave pretty.’ Pray, ma'am, what would you like me to say next?”

“To ‘habit,’ doctor, to ‘habit’; and don't talk nonsense while the precious time is going. We'll suppose that Fred is just twelve months old to-day. Now,

if you please, tell me how I'm to make him *begin* to pay attention. And, by the way, why in the world didn't you talk to me about it when the child really was young?"

"I don't remember that you asked me; and who would be pert enough to think of schooling a young mother? Not I, at any rate. Don't I know that every mother of a first child is infallible, and knows more about children than all the old doctors in creation? But, supposing you had asked me, I should have said—Get him each day to occupy himself a little longer with one plaything than he did the day before. He plucks a daisy, gurgles over it with glee, and then in an instant it drops from the nerveless grasp. Then you take it up, and with the sweet coaxings you mothers know how to employ, get him to examine it, in his infant fashion, for a minute, two minutes, three whole minutes at a time."

"I see; fix his thoughts on one thing at a time, and for as long as you can, whether on what he sees or what he hears. You think if you go on with that sort of thing with a child from his infancy he gets accustomed to pay attention?"

"Not a doubt of it; and you may rely on it that what is called *ability*—a different thing from genius, mind you, or even talent—ability is simply the power of fixing the attention steadily on the matter in hand, and success in life turns upon this cultivated power far more than on any natural faculty. Lay a case before a successful barrister, an able man of business, notice how he absorbs all you say; tell your tale as ill as you like, he keeps the thread, straightens the tangle, and by the time you have finished, has the whole matter spread out in order under his mind's eye. Now comes in talent, or genius, or what you will, to

deal with the facts he has taken in. But attention is the attribute of the trained intellect, without which genius makes shots in the dark."

"But, don't you think attention itself is a natural faculty, or talent, or whatever we should call it?"

"Not a bit of it; it is entirely the result of training. A man may be born with some faculty or talent for figures, or drawing, or music, but attention is not a faculty at all; it is simply the power of bending such faculties as one has to the work in hand; it is a key to success within the reach of every one, but the power to turn it comes of training. Circumstances may compel a man to train himself, but he does so at the cost of great effort, and the chances are ten to one against his making the effort. For the child, on the other hand, who has been trained by his parents to fix his thoughts, all is plain sailing. He will succeed, not a doubt of it."

"But I thought school-work, Latin and mathematics, and those sorts of things, should give this kind of intellectual training?"

"They should; but it's the merest chance whether the right spring is touched, and from what you say of Fred's school-work, I should say it was not touched in his case. 'Tis incredible how much solid learning a boy will contrive to let slip by him instead of into him! No; I'm afraid you must tackle the difficulty yourself. It would be a thousand pities to let a fine fellow like Fred run to waste."

"What can I do?"

"Well, we must begin where we are; Fred *can* attend, and therefore remember: and he remembers what interests him. Now, to return to your question, How are you to make a message to Mrs. Milner as interesting to him as the affairs of his cricket club?"

There is no interest in the thing itself ; you must put interest into it from without. There are a hundred ways of doing this : try one, and when that is used up, turn to another. Only, with a boy of Fred's age, you cannot form the habit of attention as you could with a child. You can only aid and abet ; give the impulse ; the training he must do for himself."

"Make it a little plainer, doctor ; I have not yet reduced your remarks to the practical level of something I can do."

"No ? Well, Fred must train himself, and you must feed him with motives. Run over with him what we have been saying about attention. Let him know how the land lies ; that you cannot help him, but that if he wants to make a man of himself he must *make* himself attend and remember. Tell him it will be a stand-up fight, for this habit is contrary to nature. He will like that ; 'tis boy nature to show fight, and the bigger and blacker you make the other side, the more will he like to pitch in. When I was a boy I had to fight this very battle for myself, and I'll tell you what I did. I stuck up a card every week, divided down the middle. One side was for 'Remembers' ; the other side for 'Forgets.' I took myself to task every night—the very effort was a help—and put a stroke for every 'Remember' and 'Forget' of the day. I scored for every 'Remember,' and 't'other fellow' for every 'Forget.' You don't know how exciting it got. If by Thursday I had thirty-three 'Remembers' and he thirty-six 'Forgets' it behoved me to look alive ; it was not only that 'Forget' might win the game, which was up on Saturday night, but unless 'Remember' scored ten in advance, the game was 'drawn'—hardly a remove from lost."



“That’s delicious ! But, I wish, doctor, you would speak to Fred yourself. A word from you would go a long way.”

“I’ll look out for a chance, but an outsider cannot do much ; everything rests with the boy himself, and his parents.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### *POOR MRS. FUMEAU!*

“Now, young people, when I go out, let there be no noise in the house; your mother is ill, so let her little folk be thoughtful for her!”

“Oh, is mother sick again?” said little Ned with falling countenance.

“Poor Neddie! he doesn’t like mother to be ill. We all have to be so quiet, and, then, there’s nowhere to be! It isn’t like home when mother isn’t about.”

“Mary is right,” chimed in Charlie, the eldest of the family; “if I were big enough, I should run away and go to sea, mother’s so often bad! But, father, isn’t it funny? Yesterday she was quite well, and doing all sorts of horrid things, helping the maids to clear out cupboards; and now, I dare say, she is too ill to move or speak, and to-morrow, perhaps, she’ll be our jolly mother again, able to go shrimping with us, or anything else.”

“That’s because your dear mother has no self, Charlie, boy; no sooner does she feel a bit better than she does more than she can for us all, and then she is knocked up again. I wish we could teach her to be selfish, for our sakes as well as hers, for to have her with us is better than anything she can do for us; eh, Charlie?”

“Indeed, yes! We’d take lots of care of her if she’d let us. But her illness must be queer. You

know when we had scarlet fever, father? Well, for weeks and weeks, after the fever was gone, I had no more strength than a tom-tit; and you know I could not go about and do things, however unselfish I was (but I'm not, though). That's what is so queer. Do you think Dr. Prideau understands about mother?"

"Much better than you do, depend upon it, Charlie; but I confess your mother's illness is puzzling to all of us. There, children, off with you! I must write a letter or two before I go out."

Mr. Jumeau forgot to write his letters, and sat long, with his head between his hands, pondering the nature of his wife's ailments. What Charlie had put with a boy's rude bluntness had already occurred to him in a dim way. Mrs. Jumeau's illness certainly did not deprive her of bodily vigour; the attacks came on suddenly, left her as suddenly, and left her apparently in perfect health and gay spirits. And this was the more surprising, because, while an "attack" lasted, the extreme prostration, pallid countenance, and blue lips of the sufferer were painful to behold. Besides, his wife was so absolutely truthful by nature, so unselfish and devoted to her husband and family, that it was as likely she should be guilty of flagrant crime as that she should simulate illness. This sort of thing had gone on for several years. Mr. Jumeau had spent his substance on many physicians, and with little result. "No organic disease." "Overdone." "Give her rest, nourishing food, frequent change of scene and thought; no excitement; Nature will work the cure in time—in time, my good sir. We must be patient." This sort of thing he had heard again and again; doctors did *not* differ, if that were any consolation.

He went up to have a last look at the sufferer. There she lay, stretched out with limbs composed, and a rigidity of muscle terribly like death. A tear fell on the cold cheek of his wife as Mr. Jumeau kissed it, and he went out aching with a nameless dread, which, if put into words, would run—some day, and she will wake no more out of this death-like stillness.

And she? She felt the tear, heard the sigh, noted the dejected footfalls of her husband, and her weak pulse stirred with a movement of—was it joy? But the “attack” was not over; for hours she lay there rigid, speechless, with closed eyes, taking no notice of the gentle opening of the door now and then when one or another came to see how she was. Were not her family afraid to leave her alone? No; we get used to anything, and the Jumeaus, servants and children, were well used to these “attacks” in the mistress of the house. Dr. Prideau came, sent by her husband, and used even violent measures to restore her, but to no effect; she was aware of these efforts, but was not aware that she resisted them effectually.

Business engagements were pressing, and it was late before Mr. Jumeau, anxious as he was, was able to return to his wife. It was one of those lovely warm evenings we sometimes get late in May, when even London windows are opened to let in the breath of the spring. Nearly at the end of the street he heard familiar strains from *Parsifal*, played with the vigour Wagner demands. His wife? It could be no one else. As he drew nearer, her exquisite touch was unmistakable. The attack was over, then? Strange to say, his delight was not unmixed. What were these mysterious attacks, and how were they brought on?

The evening was delightful. Mrs. Jumeau was in the gayest spirits: full of tenderness towards her husband, of motherly thought for her children, now fast asleep; ready to talk brightly on any subject except the attack of the morning; any allusion to this she would laugh off as a matter of too little consequence to be dwelt upon. The next morning she was down bright and early, having made up her mind to a *giro* with the children. They did not go a-shrimping, according to Charlie's forecast, but Kew was decided upon as "just the thing," and a long day in the gardens failed to tire mother or children.

"I must get to the bottom of this," thought Mr. Jumeau.

"Your question is embarrassing; if I say, Mrs. Jumeau is suffering from *hysteria*, you will most likely get a wrong notion and discredit my words."

Mr. Jumeau's countenance darkened. "I should still be inclined to trust the evidence of my senses, and believe that my wife is unfeignedly ill."

"Exactly as I expected: simulated ailments and hysteria are hopelessly confounded; but no wonder; hysteria is a misnomer, used in the vaguest way, not even confined to women. Why, I knew a man, a clergyman in the North, who suffered from 'clergyman's sore throat'; he was a popular evangelical preacher, and there was no end to the sympathy his case evoked; he couldn't preach, so his devoted congregation sent him, now to the South of France, now to Algiers, now to Madeira. After each delightful sojourn he returned, looking plump and well, but unable to raise his voice above a hardly audible whisper. This went on for three years or so. Then



his Bishop interfered ; he must provide a curate in permanent charge, with nearly the full emoluments of the living. The following Sunday he preached, nor did he again lose his voice. And this was an earnest and honest man, who would rather any day be at his work than wandering idly about the world. Plainly, too, in the etymological sense of the word, his complaint was not hysteria. But this is not an exceptional case : keep any man in his dressing-gown for a week or two—a bad cold, say—and he will lay himself out to be pitied and petted, will have half the ailments under the sun, and be at death's door with each. And this is your active man ; a man of sedentary habits, notwithstanding his stronger frame, is nearly as open as a woman to the advances of this stealthy foe. Why, for that matter, I've seen it in a dog ! Did you never see a dog limp pathetically on his three legs that he might be made much of for his lameness, until his master's whistle calls him off at a canter on all fours ?”

“I get no nearer ; what have these illustrations to do with my wife ?”

“Wait a bit, and I'll try to show you. The throat would seem to be a common seat of the affection. I knew a lady—nice woman she was, too—who went about for years speaking in a painful whisper, whilst everybody said, ‘Poor Mrs. Marjoribanks !’ But one evening she managed to set her bed-curtains alight, when she rushed to the door, screaming, ‘Ann ! Ann ! the house is on fire ! Come at once !’ The dear woman believed ever after, that ‘something burst’ in her throat, and described the sensation minutely ; her friends believed, and her doctor did not contradict. By the way, no remedy has proved more often effectual than a house on fire, only you will see the

difficulties. I knew of a case, however, where the 'house-afire' prescription was applied with great effect. 'Twas in a London hospital for ladies; a most baffling case; patient had been for months unable to move a limb—was lifted in and out of bed like a log, fed as you would pour into a bottle. A clever young house-surgeon laid a plot with the nurses. In the middle of the night her room was filled with fumes, lurid light, &c. She tried to cry out, but the smoke was suffocating; she jumped out of bed and made for the door—more choking smoke—threw up the sash—fireman, rope, ladder—she scrambled down, and was safe. The whole was a hoax, but it cured her, and the nature of the cure was mercifully kept secret. Another example: A friend of mine determined to put a young woman under 'massage' in her own home; he got a trained operator, forbade any of her family to see her, and waited for results. The girl did not mend; 'very odd! some reason for this,' he muttered; and it came out that every night the mother had crept in to wish her child good-night; the tender visits were put a stop to, and the girl recovered."

"Your examples are interesting enough, but I fail to see how they bear; in each case, you have a person of weak or disordered intellect simulating a disease with no rational object in view. Now the beggars who know how to manufacture sores on their persons have the advantage—they do it for gain."

"I have told my tale badly; these were not persons of weak or disordered intellect; some of them very much otherwise; neither did they consciously simulate disease; not one believed it possible to make the effort he or she was surprised into. The whole question belongs to the mysterious borderland of physical and psychological science—not pathological,

observe ; the subject of disease and its treatment is hardly for the lay mind."

"I am trying to understand."

"It is worth your while ; if every man took the pains to understand the little that is yet to be known on this interesting subject he might secure his own household, at any rate, from much misery and waste of vital powers ; and not only his household, but perhaps himself—for, as I have tried to show, this that is called 'hysteria' is not necessarily an affair of sex."

"Go on ; I am not yet within appreciable distance of anything bearing on my wife's case."

"Ah, the thing is a million-headed monster ! hardly to be recognised by the same features in any two cases. To get at the *rationale* of it, we must take up human nature by the roots. We talk glibly in these days of what we get from our forefathers, what comes to us through our environment, and consider that in these two we have the sum of human nature. Not a bit of it ; we have only accounted for some peculiarities in the individual ; independently of these, we come equipped with stock for the business of life of which too little account is taken. The subject is wide, so I shall confine myself to an item or two.

"We all come into the world—since we are beings of imperfect nature—subject to the uneasy stirring of some few primary desires. Thus, the gutter child and the infant prince are alike open to the workings of the desire for esteem, the desire for society, for power, &c. One child has this, and another that, desire more active and uneasy. Women, through the very modesty and dependence of their nature, are greatly moved by the desire for esteem, They must

be thought of, made much of, at any price. A man desires esteem, and he has meetings in the market-place, the chief-room at the feast; the *pétroleuse*, the city outcast, must have notoriety—the esteem of the bad—at any price, and we have a city in flames, and Whitechapel murders. Each falls back on his experience and considers what will bring him that esteem, a gnawing craving after which is one of his earliest immaterial cognitions. But the good woman has comparatively few outlets. The esteem that comes to her is all within the sphere of her affections. Esteem she must have; it is a necessity of her nature.

“‘Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles,’

are truly to her, ‘human nature’s daily food.’

“Now, experience comes to her aid. When she is ill, she is the centre of attraction, the object of attention, to all who are dear to her; she will be ill.”

“You contradict yourself, man! don’t you see? You are painting, not a good woman, but one who will premeditate, and act a lie!”

“Not so fast! I am painting a good woman. Here comes in a condition which hardly any one takes into account. Mrs. Jumeau will lie with stiffened limbs and blue pale face for hours at a time. Is she simulating illness? you might as well say that a man could simulate a gunshot wound. But the thing people forget is, the intimate relation and co-operation of body and mind; that the body lends itself *involuntarily* to carry out the conceptions of the thinking brain. Mrs. Jumeau does not *think* herself into pallor, but every infinitesimal nerve fibre, which entwines each equally infinitesimal capillary which brings colour to the cheek, is intimately connected with the thinking

brain, in obedience to whose mandates it relaxes or contracts. Its relaxation brings colour and vigour with the free flow of the blood, its contraction, pallor, and stagnation ; and the feeling as well as the look of being sealed in a death-like trance. The whole mystery depends on this co-operation of thought and substance of which few women are aware. The diagnosis is simply this, the sufferer has the craving for outward tokens of the esteem which is essential to her nature ; she recalls how such tokens accompany her seasons of illness, the sympathetic body perceives the situation, and she is ill ; by-and-by, the tokens of esteem cease to come with the attacks of illness, but the habit has been set up, and she goes on having ‘attacks’ which bring real suffering to herself, and of the slightest agency in which she is utterly unconscious.”

Conviction slowly forced itself on Mr. Jumeau ; now that his wife was shown entirely blameless, he could concede the rest. More, he began to suspect something rotten in the State of Denmark, or women like his wife would never have been compelled to make so abnormal a vent for a craving proper to human nature.

“I begin to see ; what must I do ?”

“In Mrs. Jumeau’s case, I may venture to recommend a course which would not answer with one in a thousand. Tell her all I have told you. Make her mistress of the situation.—I need not say, save her as much as you can from the anguish of self-contempt. Trust her, she will come to the rescue, and devise means to save herself ; and, all the time, she will want help from you, wise as well as tender. For the rest, those who have in less measure—

“‘The reason firm, the temp’rate will’—

‘massage,’ and other devices for annulling the extra-



ordinary physical sensibility to mental conditions, and, at the same time, excluding the patient from the possibility of the affectionate notice she craves, may do a great deal. But this mischief which, in one shape or other, blights the lives of, say, forty per cent. of our best and most highly organised women, is one more instance of how lives are ruined by an education which is not only imperfect, but proceeds on wrong lines."

"How could education help in this?"

"Why, let them know the facts, possess them of even so slight an outline as we have had to-night, and the best women will take measures for self-preservation. Put them on their guard, that is all. It is not enough to give them accomplishments and all sorts of higher learning; these gratify the desire of esteem only in a very temporary way. But something more than a danger-signal is wanted. The woman, as well as the man, must have her share of the world's work, whose reward is the world's esteem. She must, even the cherished wife and mother of a family, be in touch with the world's needs, and must minister of the gifts she has; and that, because it is no dream that we are all brethren, and must therefore suffer from any seclusion from the *common* life."

Mrs. Jumeau's life was not "spoilt." It turned out as the doctor predicted; for days after his revelations she was ashamed to look her husband in the face; but then, she called up her forces, fought her own fight and came off victorious.

## CHAPTER IX

### *"A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU!"*

THE Christmas holidays! Boys and girls at school are counting off the days till the home-coming. Young men and maidens, who have put away childish things, do not reckon with date-stones, but consult their Bradshaws. The little ones at home are storing up surprises. The father says genially, "We shall soon have our young folk at home again." The mother? Nobody, not the youngest of the schoolgirls, is so glad as she. She thinks of setting out for church on Christmas Day with, let us hope, the whole of her scattered flock about her. Already she pictures to herself how each has altered and grown, and yet how every one is just as of old. She knows how Lucy will return prettier and more lovable than ever; Willie, more amusing; Harry, kinder; and how the elders will rejoice in baby May!

And yet, there is a shade of anxiety in the mother's face as she plans for the holidays. The brunt of domestic difficulties falls, necessarily, upon her. It is not quite easy to arrange a household for a sudden incursion of new inmates whose stay is not measured by days. Servants must be considered, and may be tiresome. Amusements, interests, must be thought of, and then—— Does the mother stop short and avoid putting into shape the "and then," which belongs to the holiday weeks after Christmas Day is over?

“Let us have a happy Christmas, any way,” she says; “we must leave the rest.”

What is it? Pretty Lucy's face clouds into sullenness. Kind Harry is quick to take offence, and his outbursts spoil people's comfort. Willie, with all his nonsense, has fits of positive moroseness. Tom argues—is always in the right. Alice—is the child always quite straightforward? There is reason enough for the strain of anxiety that mingles with the mother's joy. It is not easy to keep eight or nine young people at their best for weeks together, without their usual employments, when you consider that, wanting their elders' modicum of self-control, they may have their father's failings, and their mother's failings, and ugly traits besides hardly to be accounted for. Is it a counsel of perfection that mothers should have “Quiet Days” of rest for body and mind, and for such spiritual refreshment as may be, to prepare them for the exhausting (however delightful) strain of the holidays?

Much arrears of work must fall to the heads of the house in the young folk's holidays. They will want to estimate, as they get opportunity, the new thought that is leavening their children's minds; to modify, without appearing to do so, the opinions the young people are forming. They must keep a clear line of demarcation between duties and pastimes, even in the holidays; and they must resume the work of character-training, relinquished to some extent while the children are away at school. But, after all, the holiday problem is much easier than it looks, as many a light-hearted mother knows.

There is a way of it, a certain “Open sesame,” which mothers know, or, if they do not, all the worse for the happiness of Holiday House. Occupation? Many interests? Occupation, of course; we know what

befalls idle hands ; but "interests" are only successful in conjunction with the password ; without it, the more excitingly interesting the interests the more apt are they to disturb the domestic atmosphere and make one sulky, and another domineering, and a third selfish, and each "naughty" in that particular way in which "'tis his nature to."

Every mother knows the secret, but some may have forgotten the magic of it. Paradoxical as the statement may sound, there is no one thing of which it is harder to convince young people than that their parents love them. They do not talk about the matter, but supposing they did, this would be the avowal of nine children out of ten :

"Oh, of course, mother loves me in a way, but not as she loves X."

"How 'in a way'?"

"You know what I mean. She *is* mother, so of course she cares about things for me and all that."

"But how does she love X.?"

"Oh, I can't explain; she's fond of her, likes to look at her, and touch her, and—now don't go and think I'm saying things about mother. She's quite fair and treats us all *just* alike; but who could help liking X. best? I'm so horrid! Nobody cares for me."

Put most of the children (including X.) of good and loving parents into the Palace of Truth, children of all ages, from six, say, to twenty, and this is the sort of thing you would get. Boys would, as a rule, credit "mother," and girls, "father," with the more love; but that is only by comparison; the one parent is only "nicer" than the other. As for appropriating or recognising the fulness of love lavished on them, they simply do not do it.

And why? Our little friend has told us; mother and father are quite fair, there is no fault to be found in them, but "I'm so horrid, nobody cares for me." There you have the secret of "naughtiness." There is nothing more pathetic than the sort of dual life of which the young are dimly conscious. On the one hand there are premonitions of full and perfect being, the budding wings of which their thoughts are full, and for which their strong sense of justice demands credit. Mother and father ought to know how great and good and beautiful they are in possibility, in prospective. They must have the comprehension, appreciation, which, if they cannot get in the drawing-room, they will seek in the kitchen or the stable-yard. Alnaschar visions? If so, it is not young Alnaschar, but his parents, who kick over the basket of eggs.

If the young folk are pugnacious about their "rights," and are over-ready with their "It's not fair!" "It's a shame!" it is because they reckon their claims by the great possible self, while, alas! they measure what they get by the actual self, of which they think small things. There is no word for it but "horrid;" bring them to book, and the scornful, or vain, or bumptious young persons we may know are alike in this—every one of them is "horrid" in his or her own eyes.

Now, if you know yourself to be horrid, you know that, of course, people do not love you; how can they? They are kind to you and all that, but that is because it's their business, or their nature, or their duty to be kind. It has really nothing to do with you personally. What you want is some one who will find you out, and be kind to you, and love you just for your own sake and nothing else. So do we reason



when we are young. It is the old story. The good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. Only we feel things more acutely when we are young, and take sides alternately with ourselves and against ourselves ; small is the wonder that their elders find young people "difficult ;" that is just what they find themselves.

"Fudge!" says the reader, who satisfies himself with the surface, and recalls the fun and frolic and gaiety of heart, the laughter and nonsense and bright looks of scores of young people he knows : of course they are gay, *because* they are young ; but we should have many books about the sadness of youth if people in their "teens" might have the making of them. Glad and sad are not a whole octave apart.

How soon does this trouble of youth begin ? That very delightful little person, the Baby, is quite exempted. So, too, are the three, four, and five-year-old darlings of the nursery. They gather on your knee, and take possession of you, and make no doubt at all of your love or their deserts. But a child cannot always get out of the nursery before this doubt with two faces is upon him. I know a boy of four, a healthy intelligent child, full of glee and frolic and sense, who yet has many sad moments because one and another do not love him, and other very joyful, grateful moments because some little gift or attention assures him of love. His mother, with the delicate tact mothers have, perceives that the child needs to be continually reinstated in his own esteem. She calls him her "only boy," treats him half as her little lover, and so evens him with the two bright little sisters whom, somehow, and without any telling, poor Georgie feels to be sweeter in temper and more lovable than he. An exceedingly instructive little

memorial of a child who died young came under our notice some time ago. His parents kept their children always in an atmosphere of love and gladness; and it was curious to notice that this boy, a merry, bright little fellow, was quite incapable of realising his parents' love. That they should love his sister was natural, but how *could* they love him?

The little ones in the nursery revel in love, but how is it with even the nursery elders? Are they not soon taught to give place to the little ones and look for small show of love, because they are "big boys" and "big girls"? The rather sad aloofness and self-containedness of these little folk in some families is worth thinking about. Even the nursery is a microcosm, suffering from the world's ailment, love-hunger, a sickness which drives little children and grown-up people into naughty thoughts and wicked ways.

I knew a girl whose parents devoted themselves entirely to training her; they surrounded her with care and sufficient tenderness; they did not make much of her openly, because they held old-fashioned notions about not fostering a child's self-importance and vanity. They were so successful in suppressing the girl's self-esteem that it never occurred to her that all their cares meant love until she was woman-grown, and could discern character, and, alas! had her parents no more to give them back love for love. The girl herself must have been unloving? In one sense, all young beings are unloving; in another, they are as vessels filled, brimming over with love seeking an outlet. This girl would watch her mother about a room, walk behind her in the streets—adoringly. Such intense worship of their parents is more common

in children than we imagine. A boy of five years was asked what he thought the most beautiful thing in the world. "Velvet," he replied, with dreamy eyes, evidently thinking of his mother in a velvet gown. His parents are the greatest and wisest, the most powerful, and the best people within the narrow range of the child's world. They are royal personages—his kings and queens. Is it any wonder he worships, even when he rebels?

But is it not more common, now-a-days, for children to caress and patronise their parents, and make all too sure of their love? It may be; but only where parents have lost that indescribable attribute—dignity? authority?—which is their title to their children's love and worship; and the affection which is lavished too creaturely-wise on children fails to meet the craving of their nature. What is it they want, those young things so gaily happy with doll or bat or racquet? They want to be reinstated; they labour, some poor children almost from infancy, under a sad sense of demerit. They find themselves so little lovable, that no sign short of absolute telling with lip and eye and touch will convince them they are beloved.

But if one whom they trust and honour, one who *knows*, will, seeing how faulty they are, yet love them, regarding the hateful faults as alien things to be got rid of, and holding them, in spite of the faults, in close measureless love and confidence, why, then, the young lives expand like flowers in sunny weather, and where parents know this secret of loving there are no morose boys nor sullen girls.

Actions do not speak louder than words to a young heart; he must feel it in your touch, see it in your eye, hear it in your tones, or you will never convince

child or boy that you love him, though you labour day and night for his good and his pleasure. Perhaps this is the special lesson of Christmas-tide for parents. The Son came—for what else we need not inquire now—to reinstate men by *compelling* them to believe that they—the poorest shrinking and ashamed souls of them—that they live enfolded in infinite personal love, desiring with desire the response of love for love. And who, like the parent, can help forward this “wonderful redemption”? The boy who knows that his father and his mother love him with measureless patience in his faults, and love him out of them, is not slow to perceive, and receive, and understand the dealings of the higher Love.

But why should good parents, more than the rest of us, be expected to exhibit so divine a love? Perhaps because they are better than most of us; anyway, that appears to be their vocation. And that it is possible to fulfil even so high a calling we all know, because we know good mothers and good fathers.

Parents, love your children, is, probably, an unnecessary counsel to any who read this paper; at any rate, it is a presuming one. But let us say to reserved undemonstrative parents who follow the example of righteous Abraham and *rule* their households,—Rule none the less, but let your children feel and see and be quite sure that you love them.

We do not suggest endearments in public, which the young folk cannot always abide. But, dear mother, take your big schoolgirl in your arms just once in the holidays, and let her have a good talk, all to your two selves; it will be to her like a meal to a hungry man. For the youths and maidens—remember, they would sell their souls for love; they

do it too, and that is the reason of many of the ruined lives we sigh over. Who will break down the partition between supply and demand in many a home where there are hungry hearts on either side of the wall?



## CHAPTER X

### PARENTS IN COUNCIL

#### PART I

“Now, let us address ourselves to the serious business of the evening. Here we are :

‘Six precious (pairs), and all agog,  
To dash through thick and thin !’

*Imprimis*—our desire is for reform ! Not reform by Act of Parliament, if you please ; but, will the world believe ?—we veritably desire to *be reformed* ! And that, as a vicarious effort for the coming race. Why, to have conceived the notion entitles us to sit by for our term of years and see how the others do it !”

“Don’t be absurd, Ned, as if it were all a joke ! We’re dreadfully in earnest, and can’t bear to have the time wasted. A pretty President you are.”

“Why, my dear, that’s the joke ; how can a man preside over a few friends who have done him the honour to dine at his table ?”

“Mrs. Clough is quite right. It’s ‘Up boys, and at it !’ we want to be ; so, my dear fellow, don’t let any graceful scruples on your part hinder work.”

“Then, Henderson, as the most rabid of us all, you must begin.”

“I do not know that what I have to say should come first in order ; but to save time I’ll begin. What I complain of is the crass ignorance of us—of

myself, I mean. You know what a magnificent spectacle the heavens have offered these last few frosty nights. Well, one of our youngsters has, I think, some turn for astronomy. 'Look, father, what a great star! It's big enough to make the night light without the moon. It isn't always there; what's its name, and where does it go?' The boy was in the receptive 'How I wonder what you are' mood; anything and everything I could have told him would have been his—a possession for life.

"'That's not a star, it's a planet, Tom,' with a little twaddle about how planets are like our earth, more or less, was all I had for his hungry wonder. As for how one planet differs from another in glory, his sifting questions got nothing out of me; what nothing has, can nothing give. Again, he has, all of his own wit, singled out groups of stars and, like Hugh Miller, wasn't it?—pricked them into paper with a pin. 'Have they names? What is this, and this?' 'Those three stars are the belt of Orion'—the sum of my acquaintance with the constellations, if you will believe it! He bombarded me with questions all to the point. I tried bits of book knowledge which he did not want. It was a 'bowing' acquaintance, if no more, with the glorious objects before him that the child coveted, and he cornered me till his mother interfered with, 'That will do, Tom: don't tease father with your questions.' A trifling incident, perhaps, but do you know I didn't sleep a wink that night, or rather, I did sleep, and dreamt, and woke for good. I dreamt the child was crying for hunger and I had not a crust to give him. You know how vivid some dreams are. The moral flashed on me. The child had been crying to me with the hunger of the mind. He had asked for bread and got a stone. A thing

like that stirs you. From that moment I had a new conception of a parent's vocation and of my unfitness for it. I determined that night to find some way to help ourselves and the thousands of parents in the same ignorant case."

"Well, but, Henderson, you don't mean to say that every parent should be an astronomer? Why, how can a man with other work tackle the study of a lifetime?"

"No, but I do think our veneration for science frightens us off open ground. Huxley somewhere draws a line between science and what he calls 'common information,' and this I take to mean an acquaintance with the facts about us, whether of Nature or of society. It's a shameful thing to be unable to answer such questions as Tom's. Every one should know something about such facts of Nature as the child is likely to come across. But how to get at this knowledge! Books? Well, I don't say but you may get to know *about* most things from books, but as for knowing the thing itself, let me be introduced by him that knew it before me!"

"I see what you mean; we want the help of the naturalist, an enthusiast who will not only teach but fire us with the desire to know."

"But don't you find, Morris, that even your enthusiast, if he's a man of science, is slow to recognise the neutral ground of common information?"

"That may be; but, as for getting what we want—pooh! it's a question of demand and supply. If you don't mind my talking about ourselves I should like just to tell you what we did last summer. Perhaps you may know that I dabble a little in geology—only dabble—but every tyro must have noticed how the features of a landscape depend on its geological forma-

tion, and not only the look of the landscape, but the occupations of the people. Well, it occurred to me that if, instead of the hideous 'resources'—save the word!—of a watering-place, what if we were to study the 'scape' of a single formation? The children would have that, at any rate, in visible presentation, and would hold a key to much besides.

“My wife and I love the South Downs, perhaps for auld sake's sake, so we put up at a farmhouse in one of the lovely 'Lavants' near Goodwood. Chalk and a blackboard were inseparably associated; and a *hill* of chalk was as surprising to the children as if all the trees were bread and cheese. Here was *wonder* to start with, wonder and desire to know. Truly, a man hath joy in the answer of his mouth! The delight, the deliciousness of pouring out answers to their eager questions! and the illimitable receptivity of the children! This was the sort of thing—after scrawling on a flint with a fragment of chalk:—

“‘What is that white line on the flint, Bob?’—‘Chalk, father,’ with surprise at my dulness; and then the unfolding of the tale of wonder—thousands of lovely infinitely small shells in that scrawl of chalk; each had, ages and ages ago, its little inmate, and so on. Wide eyes and open mouths, until sceptical Dick—‘Well, but, father, how did they get here? How could they crawl or swim to the dry land when they were dead?’ More wonders, and a snub for that small boy. ‘Why, this hillside we are sitting on is a bit of that old sea-bottom!’ And still the marvel grew, until, trust me, there is not a feature of the chalk that is not written down in *le journal intime* of each child's soul. They know the soft roll of the hills, the smooth dip of the valleys, the delights of travellers' joy, queer old yews, and black-berrying in the sudden

'bottoms' of the chalk. The endless singing of a solitary lark—nothing but larks—the trailing of cloud-shadows over the hills, the blue skies of Sussex, blue as those of Naples—these things are theirs to have and to hold, and are all associated with the chalk ; they have the sense of the earth-mother, of the connection of things, which makes for poetry.

"Then their mother has rather a happy way of getting pictures printed on the 'sensitive plate' of each. She hits on a view, of narrow range generally, and makes the children look at it well and then describe it with closed eyes. One never-to-be forgotten view was seized in this way. 'First grass, the hill-slopes below us, with sheep feeding about : and then a great field of red poppies—there's corn, but we can't see it ; then fields and fields of corn, quite yellow and ripe, reaching out a long way ; next, the sea, very blue, and three rather little boats with white sails ; a lark a long way up in the sky singing as loud as a band of music ; and *such* a shining sun !' No doubt our little maid will have all that to her dying day ; and isn't it a picture worth having ?"

"Mr. Morris's hint admits of endless expansion ; why, you could cover the surface formations of England in the course of the summer holidays of a boy's schooldays, and thus give him a key to the landscape, fauna, and flora of much of the earth's surface. It's admirable."

"What a salvage ! The long holidays, which are apt to hang on hand, would be more fully and usefully employed than schooldays, and in ways full of out-of-door delights. I see how it would work. Think of the dales of Yorkshire, where the vivid green of the mountain limestone forms a distinct line of junction with the dim tints of the heather on the



millstone grit of the moors, of the innumerable rocky nests where the ferns of the limestone—hartstongue, limestone polypody, beech fern, and the rest—grow delicately green and perfect as if conserved under glass. Think of the endless ferns and mosses and the picturesque outlines of the slate, both in the Lake Country and in Wales. What collections the children might form, always having the geological formation of the district as the leading idea.”

“You are getting excited, Mrs. Tremlow. For my part, I cannot rise to the occasion. It is dull to have ‘delicious!’ ‘delightful!’ ‘lovely!’ hailing about one’s ears, and to be out of it. Pray, do not turn me out for the admission, but my own feeling is strongly against this sort of dabbling in science. In this bird’s-eye view of geology, for instance, why in the world did you begin with the chalk? At least you might have started with, say, Cornwall.”

“That is just one of the points where the line is to be drawn; you specialists do one thing thoroughly—begin at the beginning, if a beginning there is, and go on to the end, if life is long enough. Now, we contend that the specialist’s work should be laid on a wide basis of common information, which differs from science in this amongst other things—you take it as it occurs. A fact comes under your notice; you want to know why it is, and what it is; but its relations to other facts must settle themselves as time goes on, and the other facts turn up. For instance, a child of mine should know the ‘blackcap’ by its rich note and black upstanding headgear, and take his chance of ever knowing even the name of the family to which his friend belongs.”

“And surely, Mr. Morris, you would teach history in the same way; while you are doing a county, or a

'formation'—isn't it?—you get fine opportunities for making history a real thing. For instance, supposing you are doing the—what is it?—of Dorsetshire? You come across Corfe Castle standing in a dip of the hills, like the trough between two waves, and how real you can make the story of the bleeding prince dragged over the downs at the heels of his horse."

"Yes, and speaking of the downs, do you happen to know, Mrs. Tremlow, the glorious downs behind Lewes, and the Abbey and the Castle below, all concerned in the story of the great battle; and the ridge of Mount Harry across which De Montfort and his men marched while the royal party were holding orgies in the Abbey, and where, in the grey of the early morning, each man vowed his life to the cause of liberty, face downwards to the cool grass, and arms outstretched in the form of a cross? Once you have made a study on the spot of one of those historic sites, why, the place and the scene is a part of you. You couldn't forget it if you would."

"That is interesting, and it touches on a point to which I want to call your attention; have you noticed that in certain districts you come across, not only the spots associated with critical events, but monuments of the leading idea of centuries? Such as these are the ruined abbeys which still dominate every lovely dale in Yorkshire; the twelfth-century churches, four or five of which—in certain English counties—you come across in the course of a single day's tramp, and of which there is hardly a secluded out-of-the-way nook in some counties that has not its example to show; such, again, are the endless castles on the Welsh border, the Roman camps on the downs, each bearing witness to the dominant thought, during a

long period, whether of war, or, of a time when men had some leisure from fighting."

"And not only so. Think of how the better half of English literature has a local colouring; think of the thousand spots round which there lingers an aroma of poetry and of character, which seems to get into your brain somehow, and leave there an image of the man, a *feeling* of his work, which you cannot arrive at elsewhere. The Quantocks, Grasmere, Haworth Moors, the Selborne 'Hanger,' the Lincolnshire levels—it is needless to multiply examples of spots where you may see the raw material of poetry, and compare it with the finished work."

"All this is an inspiring glimpse of the possible; but surely, gentlemen, you do not suppose that a family party, the children, say, from fifteen downwards, can get in touch with such wide interests in the course of a six weeks' holiday? I doubt if, even amongst ourselves, any but you, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Clough, have this sort of grasp of historical and personal associations."

"We must leave that an open question, Mrs. Henderson; but what I do contend for is, that children have illimitable capacity for all knowledge which reaches them in some sort through the vehicle of the senses: what they *see* and delight in you may pin endless facts, innumerable associations, upon, and children have capacity for them all: nor will they ever treat you to lack-lustre eye and vacant countenance. Believe me 'tis their nature to' hunger after knowledge as a labouring man hungers for his dinner; only, the *thing* must come in the first, the words which interpret it in the second place."

"You mean that everything they see is to lead to a sort of object lesson?"

“Indeed I do not! Object lesson! talkee, talkee, about a miserable cut-and-dried scrap, hardly to be recognised by one who knows the thing. I should not wonder if it were better for a child to go without information than to get it in this unnatural way. No, let him see the thing big and living before him, behaving according to its wont. Specimens are of infinite use to the scientist whose business it is to generalise, but are misleading to the child who has yet to learn his individuals. I don’t doubt for a minute that an intelligent family out for a holiday might well cover all the ground we have sketched out, and more; but who in the world is to teach them? A child’s third question about the fowls of the air or the flowers of the field would probably floor most of us.”

“That’s coming to the point. I wondered if we ever meant to touch our subject again to-night. To skim over all creation in an easy, airy way is exciting, but, from an educational standpoint, ’tis comic to the father with a young swarm at home who care for none of these things.”

“Of course they don’t, Withers, if they have never been put in the way of it; but try ’em, that’s all. Now, listen to my idea; I shall be too glad if any one strikes out a better, but we must come to a point, and pull up the next who wanders off on his own hobby. Each of us wishes to cover all, or more, or some of, the ground suggested in our desultory talk. Difficulty, we can’t teach because we don’t know. We are in a corner with but one way out. *We must learn* what we should teach. How? Well, let us form ourselves into a college, or club, or what you like. Now, it’s simply the A B C of many things we wish to learn. Once organised, we shall see our

way to the next step. Even in the small party here to-night, some know something of geology, some are at home in the byways of history; what we cannot evolve from our midst we must get from outside, and either amateur recruits or professional folk must be pressed into service; recruits would be much the best, for they would learn as well as teach. Then, when we are organised, we may consider whether our desire is to exhaust a single district in the way suggested, or to follow some other plan. Only, please, if it be a district, let it be a wide one, so that our intercourse be confined to 'speaking' in passing, like ships at sea. Don't, for pity's sake, let it be a social thing, with tennis, talk, and tea!"

"Suppose we do enrol ourselves, how frequent do you think should be our meetings?"

"We'll leave that question; in the meantime, those in favour of Mr. Morris's motion that we form ourselves into a society for the consideration of matters affecting the education of children—the parents' part of the work, that is—will signify the same in the usual way."

"Carried unanimously!"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ancient history now; a forecast fulfilled in the formation of the Parents' National Educational Union.



## CHAPTER XI

### *PARENTS IN COUNCIL*

#### PART II

“WE have listened to you, gentlemen, with great deference. We have profited much, and perceive a great field of work before us. I hope we may get a little outside help. I heard the other day of a young lady learned in mosses who is in the habit of taking the children she knows on ‘mossing’ expeditions. But what I wish to say is, education, like charity, begins at home, and you have chosen to lead us far afield at the very outset!”

“Truly, we did go off at a canter! But don’t you think ’tis a matter for curtain discipline? If your son Tom had not ‘wondered what you are’ we might have begun quite at the beginning, if there is one; or, most likely, should have been till this moment wondering where to begin. We are grateful to you, Henderson, for starting us anywhere; and more so to Mrs. Henderson for her axiom, Education begins at home.”

“I daresay experienced people get to know all about it,” said Mrs. Clough; “but the mother of even two or three little ones has a sense of being at sea without rudder or compass. We know so little about children, or, indeed, about human beings at all! Parents before our time had something to go upon; and the young mother could ask counsel of her elders

on all matters from 'cinder tea' to the choice of a school. But now science is abroad; many of the old wise saws turn out, not only mischievous, but ridiculous. We can't keep hold of the old, we can't get hold of the new, and there we are, like Mahomet's coffin."

"You have described our quandary exactly, Mrs. Clough! And what you say accounts for many things. The older people complain that the children of these days are growing up lax, self-pleasing, disobedient, irreverent. Now, I think myself there is a great deal that's fine in our children. They are much more of *persons* than we were at their age; but that they do pretty much what is right in their own eyes, are neither obedient nor reverent, nor even respectful, is, I am afraid, a true bill. But don't you see how it is? We are afraid of them. We feel as a navy might, turned in to dust the drawing-room ornaments! The mere touch of his clumsy great fingers may be the ruin of some precious thing. We parents, no doubt, get tenderness and insight from above to enable us for our delicate work; so I suppose it is our own fault that the children are beyond us."

"How do you mean, Mrs. Meredith? And if you, mothers, don't know what to do with the children, who does? The enlightened father lays himself out for a snub if he sets up for an authority at home."

"Oh, yes! you men make ludicrous blunders about children. But that's no help. A young mother gets a tender human creature into her keeping, full of possibilities. Her first concern is, not only to keep it in health, but, so to speak, to fill it with reserves of health to last a lifetime. At once her perplexities begin. I shall not even ask to be excused for venturing upon details; the affairs of a young human

being are important enough to engage the attention of Queen, Lords, and Commons, did they but know it. Well, a mother I know wished her child to be clothed delicately, as befits a first-born. She sent to Ireland for a delicious baby trousseau of lace and cambric. You gentlemen don't understand. Hardly had the dear little garments gone through their first wash, when somebody tells her that 'oo' a' 'oo' is the only wear for babies and grown ups. I doubt if to this day she knows why, but there was a *souçon* of science in the suggestion, so the sweet cambrics were discarded and fine woollens took their place. By-and-by, when the child came to feed like other mortals, there was a hail of pseudo-science about her ears. 'Grape-sugar,' 'farinaceous foods,' 'saliva,' and what not; but this was less simple than the wool question. She could make nothing of it, so asked her doctor how to feed the child. Further complications arose: 'the child sees everything;' 'the child knows everything;' 'what you make him now he will be through life;' 'the period of infancy is the most important in his life.' My poor friend grew bewildered, with the result that, in her ignorant anxiety to do right, she is for ever changing the child's diet, nurse, sleeping hours, airing hours, according to the last lights of the most scientific of her acquaintance; and 'tis my belief the little one would be a deal better off brought up like its mother before it."

"Then, Mrs. Meredith, you would walk in the old paths?"

"Not a bit of it! Only I want to see where I'm going. I think we live in an age of great opportunities. But my contention is, that you cannot bring up children on hearsay in these days; there is some principle involved in the most everyday matter, and

we must go to school to learn the common laws of healthy living and well-being."

"Mrs. Meredith is right: here is serious work sketched out for us, and of a kind as useful for ourselves as for our children. We *must* learn the first principles of human physiology."

"Would not it do to learn what is called Hygiene? I have a notion that is physiology made easy; that is, you are just taught what to do, without going *fully* into the cause why."

"No, we must stick to physiology: I don't believe a bit in learning *what* to do, unless founded upon a methodical, not scrappy, knowledge of *why* we do it. You see, all parts of the animal economy are so inter-dependent, that you cannot touch this without affecting that. What we want to get at is, the laws for the well-being of every part, the due performance of every function."

"Why, man, you would have every one of us qualify to write M.D. to his name."

"Not so; we shall not interfere with the doctors; we leave sickness to them; but the preservation of health, the increase in bodily vigour, must be our care. In this way, we acquaint ourselves fully with the structure of the skin, for example, with its functions, and the inter-dependence between these and the functions of certain internal organs. Now, secure vigorous action of the skin, and you gain exhilaration of spirits, absolute joy for the time, followed by a rise in the sense of general well-being, *i.e.*, happiness. You remember how a popular American poet sits on a gate in the sun after his bath, using his flesh-brushes for hours, until he is the colour of a boiled lobster, and 'more so.' He might be more seemly employed, but his *joy* is greater than if daily telegrams brought him

word of new editions of his poems. Well, if due action of the skin is a means to a joyous life, to health and a genial temper, what mother is there who would not secure these for her child? But the thing is not so simple as it looks. It is not merely a case of bath and flesh-brush: diet, clothes, sleep, bedroom, sunshine, happy surroundings, exercise, bright talk, a thousand things must work together to bring about this 'happy-making' condition. What is true of the skin is true all round, and we cannot go to work with a view to any single organ or function; all work together: and we must aim at a thorough grip of the subject. Is it, then, decided 'without one if or but,' that we get ourselves instructed in the science of living?"

"The 'science of living'—yes, but that covers much beyond the range of physiology. Think of the child's mind, his moral nature, his spiritual being. It seems to me that we already make too much of the body. Our young people are encouraged to sacrifice everything to physical training; and there is a sensuousness well hit-off in George Eliot's 'Gwendoline,' in the importance given to every detail of the bath and the toilet. One is weary of the endless magnification of the body and its belongings. And, what is more, I believe we are defeating our own ends. 'Groom' the skin, develop the muscles, by all means; but there is more to be thought of, and I doubt if to live to the flesh, even in these ways, is permissible."

"Right, Mrs. Meredith! But don't think for a moment that physiology lends itself to the cult of muscle. Here is a youth whose *biceps* are his better part: like most of us, he gets what he aims at—some local renown as an athlete. But what does he pay for the whistle? His violent 'sports' do not materially



increase the measure of blood which sustains him : if the muscles get more than their share, their gain implies loss elsewhere, to the brain, commonly, and, indeed, to all the vital organs. By-and-by, the sports of youth over, your brawny, broad-chested young fellow collapses ; is the victim of *ennui*, and liver, lungs, or stomach send in their requisition for arrears of nourishment fraudulently made away with."

"But, surely, Mr. Meredith, you do not think lightly of physical development ? Why, I thought it one of the first duties of parents to send their offspring into the world as 'fine animals.'"

"So it is ; but here, as elsewhere, there is a 'science of the proportion of things,' and the young people who go in violently and without moderation for muscular feats are a delusion and a snare : in the end they do not prove 'fine animals ;' they have little 'staying' power."

"But a child is more than an animal ; we want to know how mind and moral feelings are to be developed ?"

"Even then, Mrs. Tremlow, we should find much help in the study of physiology—mental physiology, if you like to call it so. The border-line where flesh and spirit meet seems to me the new field, an Eldorado, I do believe, opened to parents and to all of us concerned with the culture of character. I mean, the habits a child grows up with appear to leave some sort of register in his material brain, and thus to become part of himself in even a physical sense. Thus it rests with parents to ease the way of their child by giving him the habits of the good life in thought, feeling, and action, and even in spiritual things. We cannot make a child 'good,' but, in this

way; we can lay paths for the good life and the moral life in the very substance of his brain. We cannot make him hear the voice of God; but, again, we can make paths where the Lord God may walk in the cool of the evening. We cannot make the child clever; but we can see that his brain is nourished with pure blood, his mind with fruitful ideas."

"I suppose all this would be encouraging if one were up to it. But I feel as if a great map of an unknown country were spread before me, where the few points one wants to make for are unmarked. How, for instance, to make a child obedient, kind, and true?"

"Your question, Mrs. Tremlow, suggests further ground we must cover: a few set rules will be of little service; we must know how much there is in 'human nature,' and how to play upon it as a musician on the keys of his instrument. We must add to our physiology, psychology, and, to psychology, moral science. Complex, yet most simple, manifold, yet one, human nature is not to be ticked off in a lecture or two as a subject we have exhausted; but there is no conceivable study which yields such splendid increase for our pains."

"And the spiritual life of the child? Does either of these 'ologies' embrace the higher life, or is it not susceptible of culture?"

"Ah, there we have new conditions—the impact of the Divine upon the human, which generates *life*, 'without which there is no living.' The life is there, imparted and sustained from above; but we have something to do here also. Spirit, like body, thrives upon daily bread and daily labour, and it is our part to set before the child those 'new

thoughts of God, new hopes of Heaven,' which should be his spiritual diet; and to practise him in the spiritual labours of prayer, praise, and endeavour. How?—is another question for our Society to work out."

## CHAPTER XII

### A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER

(AT THE CLOUGHS' DINNER-TABLE, SEPT. 10, 1990.)

"It's a capital idea! the thing ought to be commemorated. At any rate, we can give a little dinner in honour of it. Whom shall we have?"

"Dr. and Mrs. Oldcastle, and Harry's form-master, young Mr. Hilyard, and his wife, will represent school-work; *we* shall stand for parents in general; and with Dr. and Mrs. Brenton for our medical advisers, and the Dean and Mrs. Priestly to witness for things spiritual, we shall be quite a 'representative gathering.' Will my list do?"

"Famously! Couldn't be better. We all know the subject and each other. I shouldn't wonder if we have some good things said."

Mr. Clough was a City merchant, as had been his fathers before him for four or five generations; he was reputed wealthy, and was a rich man, but one who held his wealth as a public trust, reserving for personal uses only what should keep his family in refined and comfortable living. Not that there was much virtue in this, for he, and others like him, held in aversion luxurious living, and whatever savoured of the "barbarous opulence" of earlier days. Dr. Oldcastle was the head-master of an old-established foundation school; for the remaining guests they have been sufficiently introduced by Mrs. Clough.

During the dinner there was the usual gay talk, and some light handling of graver subjects until the ladies retired. Then—

“I wonder, gentlemen, has it occurred to you why my wife and I have been so pertinacious in trying to get you here to-night?”

Every one's countenance showed that he was struck by an interesting recollection.

“A little circumstance connected with this room, and a certain date that I fear I may have mentioned more than once or twice?”

“Oh, to be sure,” said the Dean; “haven't I said a dozen times to my wife, ‘There's but one thing that Clough plumes himself on—that the Fathers' and Mothers' Club was born in his dining-room!’”

“But why to-night more than any other night?”

“Why, to-night is the hundredth anniversary of that great event!” A good-humoured smile passed round. “Yes, gentlemen, I know I'm house-proud, and give you leave to laugh. But would not you cherish an old-fashioned house in a by-street, when it's the one thing that links you to history?”

“But, my dear fellow, why in the world should this Club with the stuttering initials (how I hate initials!) be glorified? It does not get in my way, as a head-master, it's true; but, mind you, a man can't play up to his Busby in the face of it! There was a man for his calling! How he'd walk over your ‘F. M. C.'s.' Fumble! aye, that's the word. Knew ‘F. M. C.' reminded me of something.”

“I'm slow to see how our Club links us with history, certainly,” murmured Dr. Brenton reflectively.

“Why, in this way: if the Club did not initiate, it certainly marked a stage in the progress of the great



educational revolution in which we have been moving for the last hundred years. Wait for two or three centuries, and you will find this revolution of ours written down as the 'New Education,' just as some one gave the happy name of the 'New Learning' to the revival of letters in the Dark Ages."

"Sorry to disoblige you, but I'm afraid none of us sees his way to more than a century of waiting, though it be to verify the statements of his best friend. But go on, old fellow, I'm with you! Make the 'revolution' plain sailing for us."

"Thanks, Hilyard; your sanction emboldens me. But which am I to 'go on' with, the word or the thing?"

"A distinction *with* a difference. If I say 'the thing,' off we go to the Dark Ages themselves; and shall come out to find the ladies cloaked and hooded in the hall!"

"A thing endurable to us elder Benedicts."

"Now, Doctor! As if you weren't tied to Mrs. Oldcastle's apron-string every minute you're not in school. Fanny and I follow you for encouragement when we feel our bond growing slack."

"To order, gentlemen, to order! or we shall get neither word nor thing. We shall all want to put in an oar anent 'my wife and I.'"

"Brenton's right. Seer, take up thy parable, and go ahead!"

"Who would contemn a behest of the Church?" (with a bow which threatened a candle-shade, deftly saved by Hilyard.) "I go ahead; I'm not to talk about the thing, but the name. Why I call this, which has been working itself out in the last hundred years or more, an educational *revolution*. In the first place, what was called 'Education' a century since

and what we call Education are essentially different things."

"Come, come! Isn't that rather strong? We go in for the classics and mathematics; and so did the schools of a hundred, or, for the matter of that, five hundred years ago. 'Tis true we have to work much more with modern languages, natural science, and other subjects of which we can give but a smattering, to the confusion alike of boys and masters. Give me a classical education, or, in default, a mathematical; 'tis training! And, for my part, I vote for the pre-Revolutionists, if that's what you choose to call them,"—with a subdued snort, which epitomised much that was not civil to the reform party.

"How much clearing of the decks must take place for even a friendly discussion! Tell us, gentlemen both, what you mean by education?"

"Mean by education, Doctor? I should not have thought our united wisdoms need be called on to answer that! A boy is educated when he knows what every gentleman should know, and when he is trained to take his place in the world."

"Dr. Oldcastle's definition suits me as well as another. Putting aside the polite acquirements, the question turns on the training—how much it includes, and how it is to be given."

"There you have it, Clough," put in Dr. Brenton; "and my contention is, that you owe the incalculable advance in *character* which has taken place in the period we are considering entirely to us doctors. Wasn't it we who found out for you that you were all blundering in the dark; that you hadn't even set your feet on the scientific basis of education; that all your doings were tentative? About a hundred years ago, men spent a third of a lifetime on mathe-

matics. Cambridge made men Senior Wranglers in those days, and perhaps the distinction was worth the work. But the world said, in that weighty way in which the world likes to talk: 'Mathematics afford a mental discipline, a fortifying of character, which no other study gives.' Now I'm not denying the worth of mathematics as a factor in education; but look at your mathematician; do you find him more to the fore, more his own master, than other men? Often enough he is irritable, obstinate, all the more wrong-headed the more he's in the right. But now *we* (observe the *we*—royalty itself couldn't make more of it) find you fumbling about blindly, snatching up now this tool, now that, natural science, languages, or what not, in order to work upon material you knew nothing about, was it mind, or morals, or what? To effect issues you had not determined on—intellectual power? Force of character? In the slough we found you—parent, schoolmaster, parson—all whose business is, more or less, the bringing up of the young; and what have we done for you? Why, we've discovered to you the nature of the material you have to work upon, the laws according to which it must be wrought. We have even put it into your hands as clay in the hands of a potter, and we've shown you what is the one possible achievement before you; that is, *the elevation of character*. Education which fails to effect this, effects nothing. There, that's what *we've* done. Every man to his trade, say I; and there's nothing like leather!"

"Well, but, but,—all this is very fine talk; but what demonstration can you give? And where in the world have I been while all this was going on? Pshaw! You delude yourselves, my dear friends. This airy talk makes flighty brains; but do you suppose I've

been a schoolmaster these forty years while all this has been going on, and yet know nothing of it?"

"That comes of fumbling over our F. M. C., instead of holding us up with both hands. But, honour bright, Dr. Oldcastle, do you see in these days any change in the manner of boy that comes to your hands fresh from his home?"

"Yes, yes! a thousand times, yes!"

"If Mr. Hilyard's courtesy had permitted me to answer for myself, I, also, should have said 'yes.' I see a most remarkable change, upon which society is to be congratulated. But what would you have? Civilisation and education must of necessity produce results, appreciable even within a single lifetime."

"Don't you think, Doctor, you might have made a trilogy of it, and promoted Christianity?" interposed the ever suave and gentle tones of the Dean. "I myself feel with Dr. Brenton, 'every man for his master,' and would fain lay every advance at the feet of mine."

"I must beg the Dean to look over a little assumed pugnacity. That we all agree with him, he may rest assured. And for this reason. Every other avenue towards perfection leads you, after weeks or months or years of delightful going, to a blank wall. You see nothing beyond; all that remains is to retrace your steps, and retrogression is always bitter. You try through Christ, and find yourself in the way of endless progress cheered by perennial hope. But the talk is growing serious. We of the 'New Education' party take to ourselves the credit of the advances Dr. Oldcastle perceives, and as testimony from an alien is very valuable, perhaps he would not mind telling us in detail what differences he perceives between the young boys of to-day and their kind of forty years ago?"

“Let me consider a moment ; your question is not easy to answer in a breath. . . . Well, in the first place, they are more apt to learn : I conceive that there has been an extraordinary advance in intelligence during the last half-century. The work we would grind over for hours in my day, these youngsters have at their finger-ends in half-an-hour, and are on the alert for more. I do believe they have a real appetite for knowledge—a weakness of which not more than one or two in a hundred was guilty when I was a boy.”

“Will you let me, as a parent, give you our explanation of these facts? For, with deference to Dr. Brenton, who justly claims so much for his craft, I think we parents deserve a pat, too. You may bring a horse to the well, but you can't make him drink. The advance, I think, is not in intelligence, but in power of attention. This, the Fathers' and Mothers' Club and its agencies recognise as the practical power of man ; that which makes all the difference between the able and successful man and the poor lag-last. And yet it is not a faculty, but is the power and habit of concentrating every faculty on the thing in hand. Now this habit of attention parents, mothers especially, are taught to encourage and cultivate in their children from early infancy. What you regard with full attention, if only for a minute, you know, and remember always. Think of the few scenes and conversations we all have so vividly fixed that we cannot possibly forget them. Why? Because at the moment our attention was powerfully excited. You reap some benefit from this early training directly the boy goes to school. The psychologists—not your craft, this time, Doctor—tell us that enormous curiosity, a ravenous appetite for knowledge, is as natural to



children as bread-and-milk hunger. Put the two together; the boy has an eager desire to know—has the power of fixing his whole mind on the new thoughts set before him, and it's as easy as A B C; of course he learns with magical quickness. The field has been ploughed by the parents, and you have only to sow your seed."

"H'm! it sounds rational; I must think it over. Anyway, the results are pleasant enough. Four hours a day instead of six or seven—and much more work done, mind you—is good for both masters and boys. Then, most of them have resources and are on nobody's hands. You'd be astonished to hear how much these fellows know, and each has his speciality. One little chap has butterflies, for instance. Ah, that reminds me! Don't tell, or I might be invited to resign; but I don't to this day know the difference between a moth and a butterfly. It's the sort of thing one ought to know, so I set up a classification of my own, no doubt correct, because it was mine! Well, this befell me. 'What have you there?' I asked a little chap, who had evidently netted a prize. 'A moth, sir, the——,' scientific name, pat. 'A moth, boy! That beautiful creature is no moth. Moths live in houses.' You should have seen the fellow suppress his grin! I couldn't ask, so don't know now; but make a point of not meeting that little chap's eye. A friend of mine, a Fellow of his College, was worse. 'I say, Oldcastle, the poets make a mighty pother about the song of the lark. Now, do tell me—do you know it when you hear it?' But as for the boys that enter now, there's not the natural object that they don't both recognise and know all about. Their collections are of scientific worth—at least, so that fellow Hilyard thinks, so we are going in for a museum of local natural history!"

“Why, Dr. Oldcastle, you’re like the man in the play, who talked prose all his life, and at last found it out! You’re our warmest friend, though you decline the connection. This, again, is the work of mothers following the lines of the ‘New Education.’ We make a great point of developing intelligent curiosity in the children about all that lives and grows within their ken. For instance, I should think most of ‘our’ mothers would feel disgraced if her child of six were not able to recognise any ordinary British tree from a twig with *leaf-buds* only. It’s Nature’s lore, and the children take to it like ducks to the water. The first seven or eight years of their lives are spent out of doors—in possible weather—learning this sort of thing, instead of pottering over picture-books and A B C. But do fill the witness-box a minute longer. All this is delicious. An outsider who speaks with authority is worth a score of partisans.”

“I bow my thanks, Clough, for the handsome things you are good enough to say. Of course my impartial witness would be quite as valuable if it told on the other side. Why, Hilyard, you’re nowhere! ’Tis I am the man of the day. But no; he’s the go-ahead fellow, and I’m the drag; yet a drag has its uses.”

“Granted, if you go down hill. But out of thine own mouth art thou convicted, most learned Master! What hast thou talked all this night but progress? But one thing more: tell us, do you find these Admirable Crichtons of yours the least in the world priggish? Or are they namby-pamby youths, who do as they’re bid, and haven’t much taste for unlawful adventure?”

“Taste for adventure! Why, little fellows of nine come, able to swim, row, ride, do everything man or boy needs do, and how are fellows of that sort to be

kept out of adventures? But they do as they're bid, I grant you, and the way they do it shows fifty times the spirit of the fellows who shirked. Mind, I'm speaking of the boys who have been brought up at home, not of those who have 'growed.' But don't run away with the notion that the best of them are perfect. We must be *at it* all the time, or the ground gained is gone from under our feet."

"Look, look! do look at Brenton: something will happen if he doesn't get an innings."

"Gentlemen, you must, you really must, hear me on this matter! You must let me show Dr. Oldcastle the 'reason why' of what he observes."

"Hear, hear! Let's have it, Doctor. Don't spare a word."

"Well, to begin at the beginning (no! not with Adam, nor even with the Dark Ages); some five-and-twenty or so, years before Clough's EVENT, men of science began to grope for a clue to the understanding of this queer riddle of human nature. That action (including speech) depends on thought, and that action—repeated action—forms character, had long ago been got at by inductive processes. Now, these meddling scientific fellows were not content with, It is, because it is! they must needs come poking round with their everlasting—'Why?' This particular 'Why' proved a most hard nut to crack; indeed, it is only within living memory that their guesses at truth have become entirely demonstrable; but, as early as I said, they had thus much ground under their feet—analogy and probability were altogether on their side, and it was impossible to prove, or even to show a fair case for, the contrary view. These scientists perceived that they were undermining the methods, the aims, the very idea of

education as popularly held. They indicated new lines, suggested new principles. But their discoveries were to be like that corn of wheat—first they must fall into the ground and die. Years passed before educationalists woke up to what had been done. At last it dawned upon them that it was now possible to formulate a *science of education*; to propose laws which should work out definite ends with mathematical certainty. The days of casual bringing-up were numbered. A basis, and that a physical basis, was found. The principle which underlies the possibility of all education was discovered to them as it is to us to-day. They were taught that the human frame, brain as well as muscle, *grows to the uses it is earliest put to*. In a hundred years, we have advanced no further in principle, but we have applied the principle in many directions. It is, indeed, hardly possible to get beyond the ground covered by this so simple sounding axiom: that is, it is hardly within our power to overstate the possibilities of education. *Anything* may be made of a child by those who first get him into their hands. No doubt, propagandism becomes the immediate duty of any who have perceived a saving principle for the race. And efforts were made in many directions to bring before parents of all classes the notion that the formation of habits is among the chief aims of education. Our host's EVENT is one of these efforts, and the Parents' Club spread like wildfire; every one was ready for it, because people were beginning to feel the wretched uncertainty of the casual method. How is it, they asked, that, bring up two boys in the same way, and one turns out a villain, the other, a credit to his family? Now, the 'New Education' deals entirely with individuals; not with children, but with the

child; the faulty habit is supplanted, observe the word, the desirable habit produced, within a definite period, say a month or so, and then the parents' easy work is to keep the child upon the lines of habit thus produced."

"Now, stop a minute, Doctor, stop a minute! I'm afraid I'm about to lose my easily won laurels. You, who are a classical scholar, must know how familiar to the mind both of Roman and Greek was this doctrine of habit. Again, a poet of our own, an eighteenth-century man—wasn't he Dryden?—expresses capitally the time-out-of-mind English feeling on this subject—

"Children, like tender osiers, take the bow,  
And, as they first are fashion'd, always grow;  
For what we learn in youth, to that alone  
In age we are by second nature prone."

"Most happy; but don't you see, Dr. Oldcastle, I began by admitting that people have always had a notion that they must bring up their children in good habits, and suppress faulty ones. But now, they have something more than a notion; they have scientific certainty. And, instead of dawdling through the whole period of childhood with spasmodic efforts to get a boy to tie his shoe-strings fast, they take it in hand once and for all, keep incessant watch for the week or two it will take to form the habit, and then the thing is done with for a lifetime. The new habit once formed, the parent's part is no more than to watch against chance returns to the old ways until the habit is ingrained in the stuff of the child's character. Now, don't you see that this is a very different thing from the desultory way in which a child was allowed to try off and on for a habit all his days, and never got it?"



“I admit there’s a difference ; it tallies, too, with what I notice in the young boys who enter with us. You mean that their mothers have definitely set themselves for a month or two, say, to form a habit—now obedience, now truthfulness, now attention, and so on—and that is why the boys come to me with *character*, not mere disposition ?”

“Yes, that’s what I mean ; and it’s on these lines we have been advancing for a whole century. In another direction, too, education has been going forward ; but, here, we have only analogy to guide us, not yet certainty. It cannot be predicated as yet, whether we are simple or complex beings, whether in each of us is bound up one life or several. It is not impossible, for instance, that, just as our physical life is sustained because multitudinous organisms come to life, feed, grow, multiply, and die, perpetually in our substance, so, perhaps what we may call our immaterial life is sustained by multitudinous lives such as our philosophy has never dreamed of. An idea, for instance, what is it ? We don’t know yet ; but this we know, that every idea we get is quick within us as a living being, that it feeds, grows, multiplies, and then, behold it is no more ! There are bodies natural and there are bodies spiritual. Perhaps this sort of thing is too immature to be pressed into service. But of other parts of us, to which names and ideas of something like personality are attached—conscience, will, our spiritual being—this it is quite safe to assert : they thrive upon their appropriate meat and work, they perish of inanition and idleness. This, too, we take into our scheme of education, and with great results.”

The Dean got up :—

“I, for one, must heartily thank Dr. Brenton for

his most suggestive lecture. No, don't look 'castigated,' Doctor ; 'tis a lecture for weight and worth, but of commendable brevity. Speaking for the 'cloth' I should like to say how much we owe to this educational revolution. A century ago, our Church was supposed to show some signs of decadence ; to-day she is *quick* to her remotest extremities. And why ? simply because she has gone with the times in following up the advances of the 'New Education.' She, with the rest of you, perceives that the world has ever one great thing to do—to bring up the young in advance of the generation before them ; that the sole valuable inheritance the present has to leave behind is—exalted national character. Wherefore, she has laboured assiduously on the two lines Dr. Brenton emphasises to-night—'that Habit is *ten* natures' ; and, that the spiritual life must flourish or decay as it is duly fed and exercised, or allowed to lie idle and unfed. Therefore, is every clergyman instructed, above all, to minister to the young of his parish—of all classes. The growing soul cannot thrive upon husks—therefore must the truth be divested of the husks of the past, and clothed upon with the living thought of the present. The young soul must be taught its work, the spiritual exercises of prayer and praise, the bodily exercise of service ; and as no man can teach what he does not know, the minister to the young must be qualified and ever active in these. Seeing these and kindred truths, our clergy are raising up about them a body of ardent young spirits to whom self-sacrifice is a law ; labour in spiritual uplands a necessity. And for much of this progress, I say, we are indebted to the labours of the 'New Educationists,' whom we therefore gladly hold up with both hands."

“This is very gratifying hearing ; we have all along been very sensible of the cordiality and helpfulness of the clergy, who so commonly throw in their lot with us. But that we should be doing them some service all the time—this is news indeed. May I imitate the Dean, and say a word professionally. We doctors have reaped where we sowed—and abundantly. In the old days, families had each ‘their doctor,’ who was called in now and then to do battle with disease which had already made headway. But now, people are beginning to see that low vitality, poor physique, and even organic disease—hereditary or other—are very commonly the results of faulty education, or bringing up, if that is the better way of putting it. What is the consequence? Why, the doctor is retained, like husband or wife, for sickness and health ; he is the medical adviser by the year, or usually by the lifetime. He thrives not on sickness, but upon health. Drops in on his clients unawares, finds one girl doubled up over a book, another standing on one foot, notes the hectic flush and bright eye of this child, the tendency to drowsiness in that—the flabby arms and quick intelligence of the little town-bred family, the stolid dulness of the farmer’s boy—for rich and poor come in course to him. He does not wait for disease to be set up, but averts the *tendency* ; and though he has found no elixir of life, nor means of averting death—this, he may almost venture to promise his clients, that so long as they live, they shall live with eye not waxed dim, nor natural force abated. And all this because he knows that the body, too, must have its education, its careful regulation, and that bone and muscle and vital organs alike grow to the *habits* you set up in them.”

Mr. Hilyard had been using his pencil for the last few minutes, and was evidently preparing to show on what lines the schools, too, had been advancing during this age of many revolutions, when—" 'Tis eleven o'clock, and the ladies!" brought the discussion to an end.

## NOTE

(To Page 111, *Translation*.)

Hobbes followed, to the letter, the philosophy which derives ideas from sense impressions ; he did not fear the consequences, and said boldly that the soul was as subservient to necessity as is society to despotism. The cultivation of noble and pure aspirations is so firmly established in England, by political and religious institutions, that speculation moves round these mighty pillars without ever shaking them. Hobbes had few supporters in his country, but Locke's influence was everywhere felt. He was moral and religious in character, and he never admitted any of the dangerous arguments which naturally follow in the train of his theories ; the majority of his fellow-countrymen, in accepting his theories, were inconsistent enough to separate cause from effect, whilst Hume and the French philosophers, admiring his system, have applied it in a much more logical way.

Locke's system of metaphysics had but one effect on the minds of Englishmen ; it dulled their intuitive originality. Even when it parched the sources of philosophical thought, it could not destroy the deeply rooted religious sentiment of the nation. But this system of metaphysics, which was received by all Europe, Germany excepted, has been one of the chief causes of the spread of immorality ; in the philosophy of the materialist men found the precepts which give sanction to every immoral practice.



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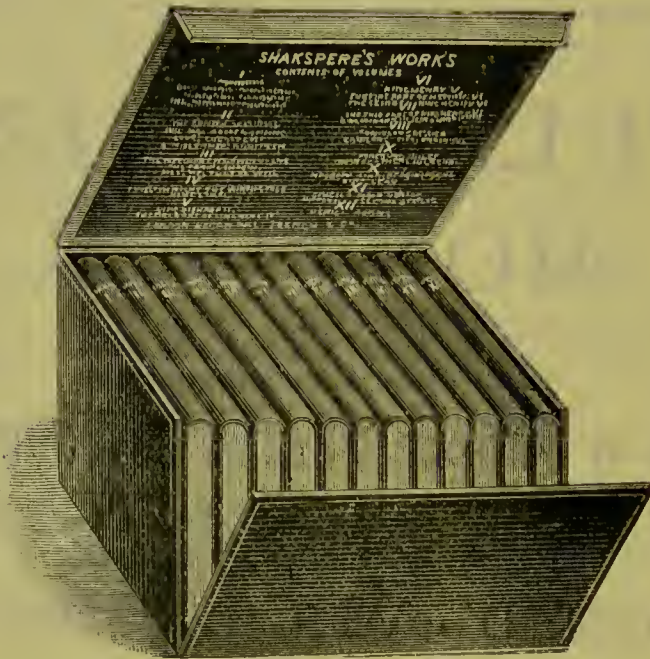


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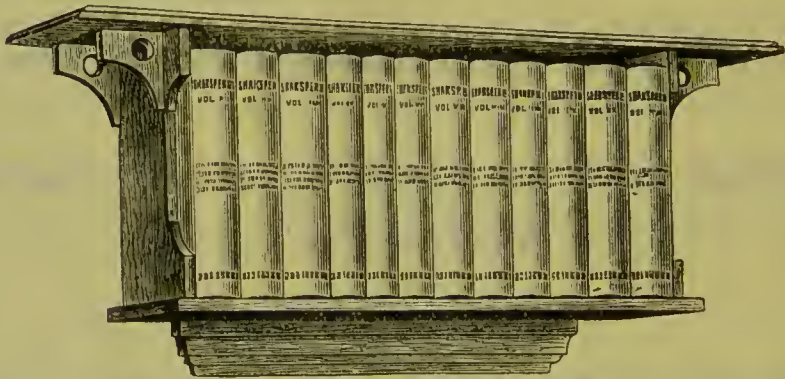
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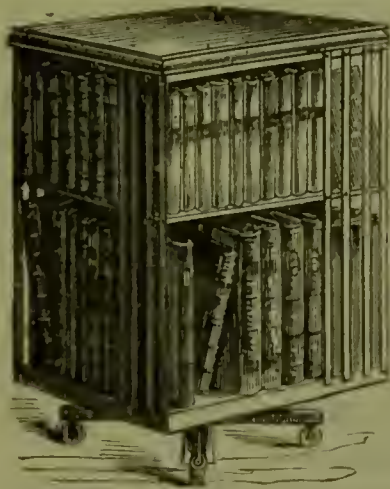
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